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Features

Britain's most persecuted minority? Millionaires

Luke Johnson, Features

The Daily Telegraph

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Workers face new tax to fund social care

Health officials draw up plans for 1.8pc levy on earnings to pay for Burnham's reforms

By **Tony Diver** *and* **Daniel Martin**

A NEW tax on income to fund social care is among plans drawn up by officials for Andy Burnham to consider in his first weeks in office.

Civil servants have developed proposals that would force workers to make contributions to a privately managed fund to pay for their care in later life. The plans, drawn up by officials in the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), could fund a new care system costing £18bn a year.

The Telegraph understands that civil servants drafted several new funding models for social care last month, after Mr Burnham said he would make the issue a top priority. The Prime Minister has said he will use "whatever political capital I have" to fix the social care system in England, and start a "conversation with the public" about how to pay for it.

Speaking ahead of a visit to a care home today, Mr Burnham said: "This comes down to a choice. We can carry on passing the problem to the next generation, or we can face it head-on and work together to build a care system that gives people dignity, security and the support they deserve."

The options drawn up by DHSC include a new levy on income, which could be set at 1.8 per cent of earnings above £6,240, paid by workers over the age of 34. Unlike National Insurance, which funds current government spending, the money would be invested on behalf of working-age people to use for care when their cohort reaches old age.

The fund would be supplemented by wealthier elderly people, who on top of paying the new levy would pay for between 10 and 45 per cent of their own costs, depending on their assets.

It would be an alternative to a 10 per cent tax on estates, which Mr Burnham has previously supported despite its "death tax" nickname from opponents.

It is understood that Whitehall officials have asked for advice on the "social insurance" model from a variety of health experts, including from three leading think tanks. The latest idea was first proposed in April by Re:State, a public services think tank where Mr Burnham recently served as an adviser.

A paper published by the group proposed mandatory contributions to a national fund, which would require an employee on a £50,000 salary to pay an extra £788 a year in tax, with an employee earning £80,000 paying an extra £1,327.

The Telegraph understands that civil servants have seized upon the idea as a way of funding Mr Burnham's plans.

Other options under consideration include a "pay-as-you-go" model similar to that used in Germany and Japan, where contributions of workers fund the care of the current elderly population.

Downing Street sources said last night that Mr Burnham would wait for the conclusions of an independent review by Baroness Casey before making any decisions about social care funding.

Seb Rees, the head of health at the Institute of Public Policy Research, said: "To succeed where others have failed, the Prime Minister needs to set out a more ambitious vision for reform – not just protecting assets or easing NHS pressures, but investing in a system that helps people live well."

Reports: Page 4

Glamorous Goodwood

Horse-racing fans enjoyed the hot weather in their finest outfits yesterday during the opening day of the Qatar Goodwood Festival in West Sussex. The meet, one of the highlights of the British flat racing season, runs until Saturday. Sport, page 9

MAX MUMBY

Infantino's £15bn plan to sell off World Cup

By **Tom Morgan** *and* **Ben Rumsby**

GIANNI INFANTINO, the president of Fifa, has announced plans to sell stakes in the World Cup to private investors.

Uefa, the European governing body and an increasingly vocal critic of Fifa, reacted with fury over the proposed £15bn deal, accusing it of trading football's "soul".

Uefa is now considering its legal options over the biggest threat to modern football since the failed 2021 Super League plot. One source said a "nuclear bomb" had gone off in the game.

The Football Association was said to be completely blindsided by Mr Infantino's proposals. National bodies, including the FA, are expected to discuss protest options at a virtual meeting tomorrow – including a World Cup boycott.

Andy Burnham, the Prime Minister, said: "The World Cup is not a product. It is the greatest competition in world sport, and it was never anyone's to sell. Dress the deal up however you like. Once you have sold a piece of it, you have sold out."

If approved, Mr Infantino's plans would result in a group of investors controlling the commercial interests of Fifa's top men's and women's competitions. It could also give Mr Infantino a way of remaining with Fifa if he reached the presidency term limit in 2031. Fifa sources yesterday denied suggestions he was already lined up as the "commissioner" of the proposed new enterprise.

Thrive Eternal, which is run by Joshua Kushner, the younger brother of Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, will lead the proposed investor group. Sources have played down suggestions that the Trump administration is involved in the plans.

Mr Infantino has been heavily criticised for cosying up to Mr Trump during the 2026 World Cup, which culminated in the US president personally intervening to overturn Folarin Balogun's suspension for the host's last-16 match.

Saudi Arabia, which will host the 2034 World Cup, is expected to express interest in the new company via its PIF sovereign wealth fund. Qatar has also maintained close ties to Mr Infantino since hosting the 2022 World Cup.

JP Morgan, which was involved in the abandoned Super League plot, is Fifa's financial adviser on the project.

Although there is no binding agreement on the plans, they increase the likelihood of an expanded World Cup or the tournament being held more

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NEWS

Club cricketers up in arms over 'click' cheat

A cheating row has erupted in club cricket after a fielder was accused of clicking his fingers to trick umpires into thinking there was an edge off the bat. An investigation has been launched into the incident at Saltburn Cricket Club in North Yorkshire, after footage appeared online that raised suspicion. Brian Devine – the fielder at the centre of the scandal – has now been nicknamed "Clicky Ponting", a nod to the former Australian captain Ricky Ponting.

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NEWS

Apprentices' parents handed extra benefits

Parents on benefits will be given £4,500 a year if their children become apprentices. Ministers said the new bursaries were part of plans to create 50,000 new apprenticeships and stop school leavers falling into a life on benefits. Parents can currently claim Universal Credit payments for their children up to the age of 18, but those handouts are withdrawn if they take up an apprenticeship. As a result, families can lose out on almost £100 a week.

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COMMENT

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard

Badenoch must end her net-zero purge

Page 14

NEWS

UPFs may not be worst thing since sliced bread

Breakfast cereals and bread have been given a reprieve by nutritionists, who have admitted that some ultra-processed foods (UPFs) are not that bad for health after all. Harvard University has found that the nutritional quality of food is far more important than the processing level when it comes to long-term health. British experts said the results provided an important balance to the current "scaremongering" about UPFs.

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BUSINESS

Burnham faces £24bn hole in spending plans

Andy Burnham has been urged to raise income tax as a £24bn hole looms in Labour's spending plans. Leading economists will warn the Prime Minister today that he must increase taxes or cut departmental budgets as surging inflation erodes the value of spending commitments. The National Institute of Economic and Social Research said Mr Burnham would need to find an extra £24bn by the end of the decade or accept real-terms cuts to spending on hospitals and schools.

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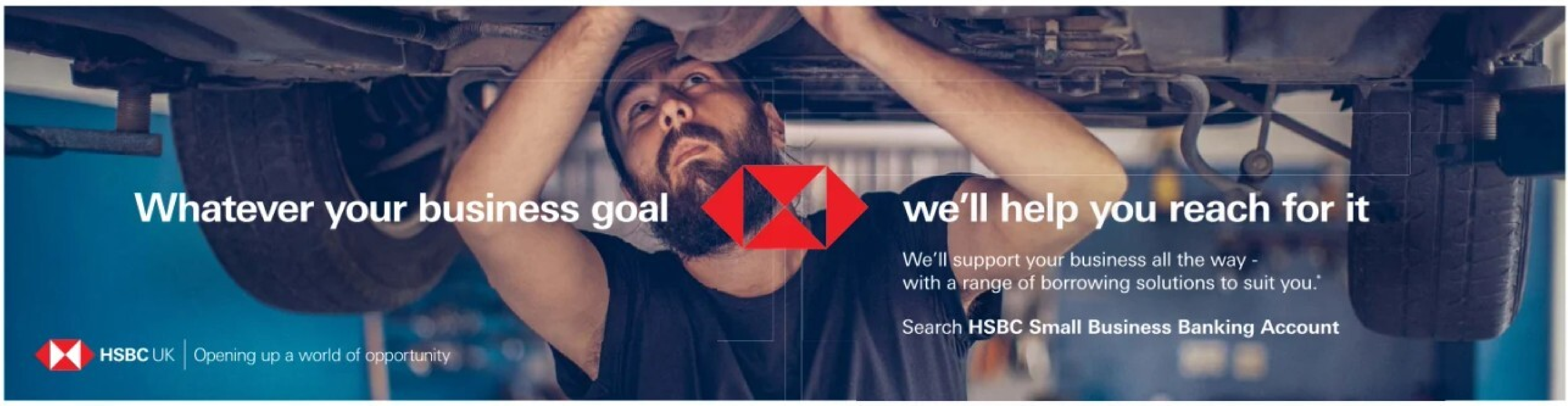
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CURRENT ACCOUNT SWITCH GUARANTEE

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'Stop Saudis torturing Christians'

Anglican bishops urge Ed Miliband to intervene to halt execution and torture inside the regime's jails

By **Charles Hymas**
HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR

CHURCH of England bishops have urged Ed Miliband to intervene to halt the executions and torture of Christians in Saudi Arabian jails.

Three bishops for Southwark, Chelmsford and Winchester have written to Mohammed Bin Salman, the ruler of Saudi Arabia, urging him to call an immediate halt to the executions of more than 50 Ethiopian Christians currently on death row in the state.

They have also submitted their appeal to the Foreign Office seeking Mr Miliband, the Foreign Secretary, to intervene to save the lives of the Christian captives who have been sentenced to death.

The bishops claimed there was evidence that the Ethiopians – who fled conflict in their own country – had been mistreated with several of them tortured and forced to sign documents they could not read or understand.

Some have been convicted of smuggling cannabis into Saudi Arabia, which the bishops say was the result of their exploitation by criminal traffickers coercing them into transporting goods into the Arab state without full knowledge of their contents.

"We are aware of accounts from several of these men that during transfers to court hearings, Saudi police officers discovered the crosses they were wearing around their necks, forcibly removed them and physically assaulted them," said the bishops in their letter to the Saudi ruler and Mr Miliband.

"The open expression of Christian belief has reportedly been discouraged or prohibited within the prison, and prisoners have been expected not to display Christian religious symbols or make reference to their faith in court. This treatment is deeply troubling.

"The right to hold, practice and express one's religious faith, including within a prison setting, is a fundamental right recognised under international law. We urge Your Royal Highness to ensure that it is upheld."

Five of the Ethiopians have been executed despite assurances by the Saudis to Ethiopian consular officials that their death sentences would be suspended and reviewed.

"Fellow detainees have reported that several of those men were told they were being taken to court or for procedural hearings relating to their cases, only to be executed hours later," said the bishops.

"Their families were not notified in advance and have since received no information about the whereabouts of their remains. In some cases, the burden of notifying the families was left to the other prisoners."

In his statement on taking up his post, Mr Miliband pledged: "I will be a Foreign Secretary who fights for Britain's interests and our values of democracy, freedom and the rule of law on the world stage."

Kemi Badenoch with victims of sexual abuse Kayleigh Corbin, far left, and Jade Belgrove at the Westminster press conference yesterday

'We also had early-release schemes but we never, ever, released this category of criminals'

Badenoch: Release shoplifters early, not killers and rapists

By **Charles Hymas**
HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR

LABOUR should release shoplifters early to combat prison overcrowding, rather than killers and rapists, Kemi Badenoch has said.

The Tory leader said that if the Government were to push ahead with its early-release scheme, then "common sense" dictated that those freed should not be the most serious and violent criminals.

"I'm not pretending that there is no challenge. There is a challenge," she told a Westminster press conference.

"If you do have to release people early, release shoplifters, not paedophiles, rapists or killers. This is just common sense."

"I'm offering a common-sense solution, and I'm not here to say everything that happened under the Conservatives was perfect. We also had early-release schemes, but we never, ever, released this category of criminals."

Mrs Badenoch also admitted that the Tories had failed to meet the demand for prison places when in power, but insisted they had never released killers or rapists from jail early.

She was joined by six rape and grooming-gang victims who waived their anonymity to plead for the Government to abandon its plans for the early release of hundreds of rapists and sex offenders, including those that had attacked them.

They later handed a letter to No10, urging Andy Burnham to back their appeals.

The Tories want the Government to rescind the commencement order launching the scheme on Sept 2, and say that ministers should introduce emergency legislation blocking the early release of serious violent and sexual offenders.

Mr Burnham last week ordered a review of the planned early release of some 6,000 prisoners, including killers, rapists and violent offenders.

He said none of them would be freed until the review determined who could and who could not be released safely into the community.

The Telegraph disclosed last week that two of the killers of Pc Andrew Harper – Albert Bowers and Jessie Cole – were among criminals set to be freed after serving just half, rather than two thirds, of their sentences. Bowers and Cole are serving 13-year sentences for manslaughter.

Serious offenders such as rapists and killers will be eligible for release halfway through their sentences, provided they have not breached prison behaviour rules.

Other offenders such as burglars, thieves and shoplifters are being released after serving 33 per cent of their sentences rather than 40 per cent.

A Labour spokesman said: "The Tories completely failed to expand prison capacity in government, meaning judges had to stop jailing offenders.

"The Conservatives started the early-release scheme because of their own failure and they've never said sorry.

"The Government has paused the scheme while an urgent review is conducted. We're also building thousands of additional jail places on top of the 3,000 we've already delivered to restore public confidence in the system and ensure victims of crime get the justice they deserve."

Polanski refuses seven times to apologise for Farage post

By **Gwyn Wright** *and*
Samuel Montgomery

ZACK POLANSKI has refused seven times to apologise for a post on social media that appeared to threaten Nigel Farage.

The Green leader posted an image of a man wearing a T-shirt with a guillotine graphic alongside the caption: "We're only making plans for Nigel."

Mr Polanski shared the photograph with his 700,000 Instagram followers as part of a series of images from a Green Party rally in Bristol on July 26.

Mr Farage has reported the Green Party leader to the police over the image. In an interview with Victoria Derbyshire on BBC *Newsnight* yesterday, Mr Polanski refused repeatedly refused to apologise and appeared to blame the Reform UK leader for amplifying the T-shirt's message.

When asked for the first time if he wanted to apologise, he said: "Well if I had done it deliberately, I would be apologising but because this was a mistake, I think the important thing is that I point out it's a mistake, that I also make sure that I condemn political violence and also, crucially, I make a commitment to be better on my social media."

Pressed again, Mr Polanski said: "No. The reason for that is because Nigel Farage, when I posted this or when the person posted it, it got less than 1,000 likes. Nigel Farage then took it, cropped it, made it look like I posted it… it's now had 3.2 million views.

"I'm accepting my responsibility in that I shouldn't have accepted that collaboration. I'm accepting we all need to condemn political violence, but I also think the reporting to the police, the ramping up of the language to say this is incitement to murder, feels like that's also putting me in a dangerous spot."

Mr Polanski added: "If Nigel Farage wants to apologise for all the times that he's put other people in danger then I'll be happy to make an apology."

After six opportunities to apologise, he added before the interview ended: "I believe in authenticity and I don't think I've done anything wrong here. I made a mistake but it wasn't a purposeful mistake. It would be very easy to apologise but actually I think it would be false."

NEWS BULLETIN

Armed asylum seeker 'was seeking attention'

A failed asylum seeker who approached a school armed with a hammer, a hatchet and a kitchen knife "to create a scene for attention" has been jailed for two years.

Douk Deng, a South Sudanese national, was "increasingly frustrated" that authorities were not helping with his attempt to stay in the UK. Deng, 21, who has been refused asylum on three occasions, wanted something dramatic to aid his cause, Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court heard.

The jury heard that he was arrested after workmen confronted him on the premises of Edgar Wood Academy in Heywood, Greater Manchester, on Aug 6 last year.

Man accused of stealing £1m of street lights

A man has been charged with stealing about £1m worth of street lamps and ornate lanterns across the UK, Hertfordshire Constabulary has said.

John O'Sullivan has been charged with 38 counts of theft across counties including Bedfordshire, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Durham, Thames Valley and Hertfordshire.

The 20 year-old is also accused of seven other thefts in Hertfordshire and is due to appear at Stevenage magistrates' court on Aug 5.

Anna O'Sullivan, 66, and Richard O'Sullivan, 67, have been charged with handling stolen goods. The pair, from Barkway, are due to appear before Stevenage magistrates on Aug 12.

Vandals force church to be hold services in café

Worshippers are holding Sunday services in a cafe after catapult-wielding vandals drove them out of church.

Lynne Le Masonry, minister at the United Reformed and Methodist Church in Sheerness, Kent, confirmed prayers were now being held in the nearby Lighthouse Café.

She said: "We have been subjected to vandalism from young people since February. They have been shooting ball bearings through our windows."

The 181-year-old church's insurance firm has now offered a "bulletproof" alternative to replace the broken glass in the windows. Pc Alison Honess, of Kent Police, said: "This is a nationwide issue and not isolated to Sheerness."

Quarry firm 'obliterates' rare butterfly habitat

A quarrying firm has been accused of "obliterating" a habitat for rare butterflies on a four-acre wildlife reserve after shoring up a rockfall.

The number of butterflies recorded at former Hoe Grange Quarry, in Derbyshire, has fallen from 200 a day to just 20 a week since Longcliffe Quarries closed off the site.

The former limestone quarry had not been mined since the 1980s and became a popular spot for the rare Wall butterfly under the management of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

Ken Orpe, of Butterfly Conservation East Midlands, told *The Telegraph*: "To obliterate the site as they have done is absolutely disgusting – we're distraught."

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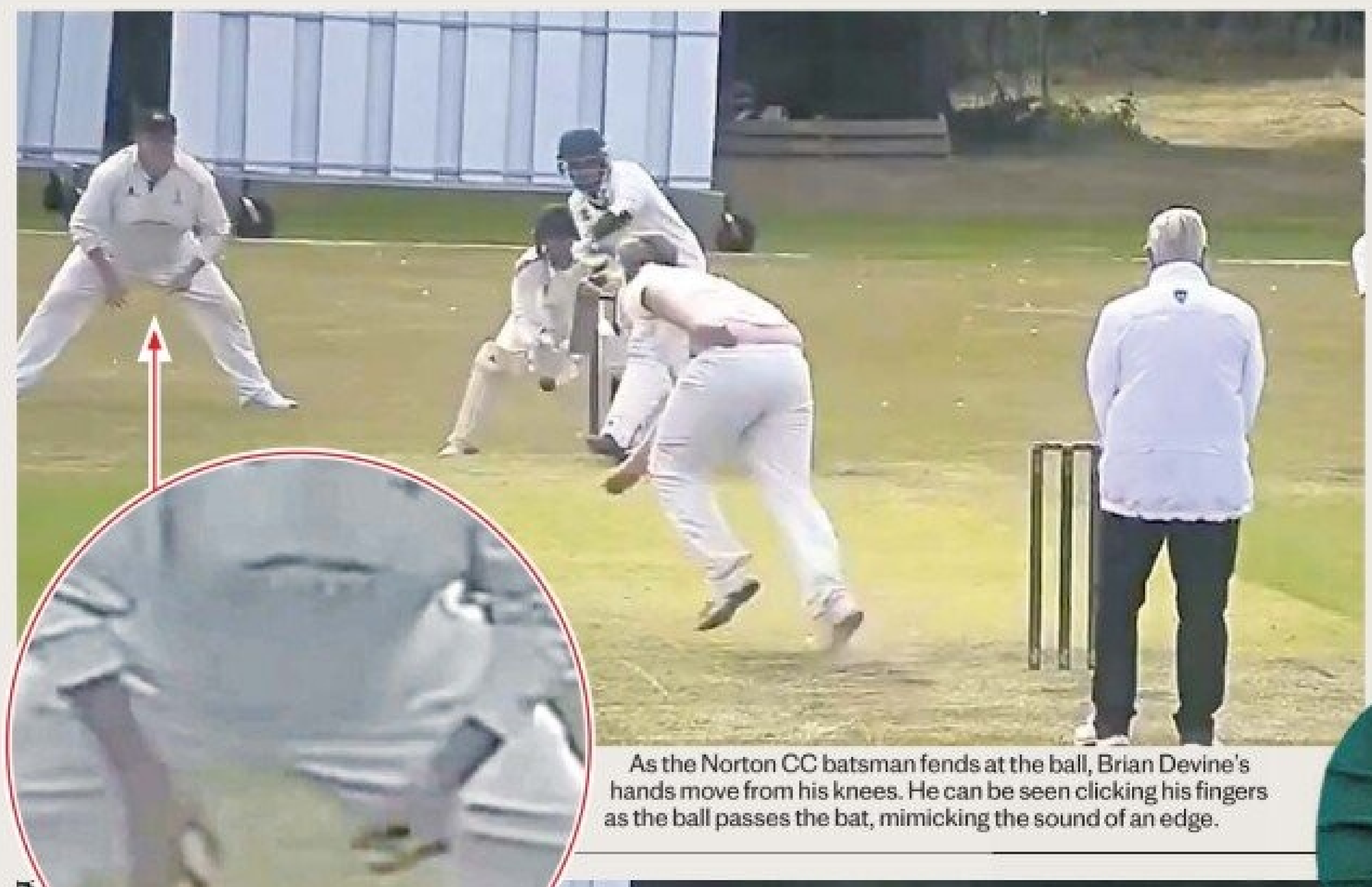
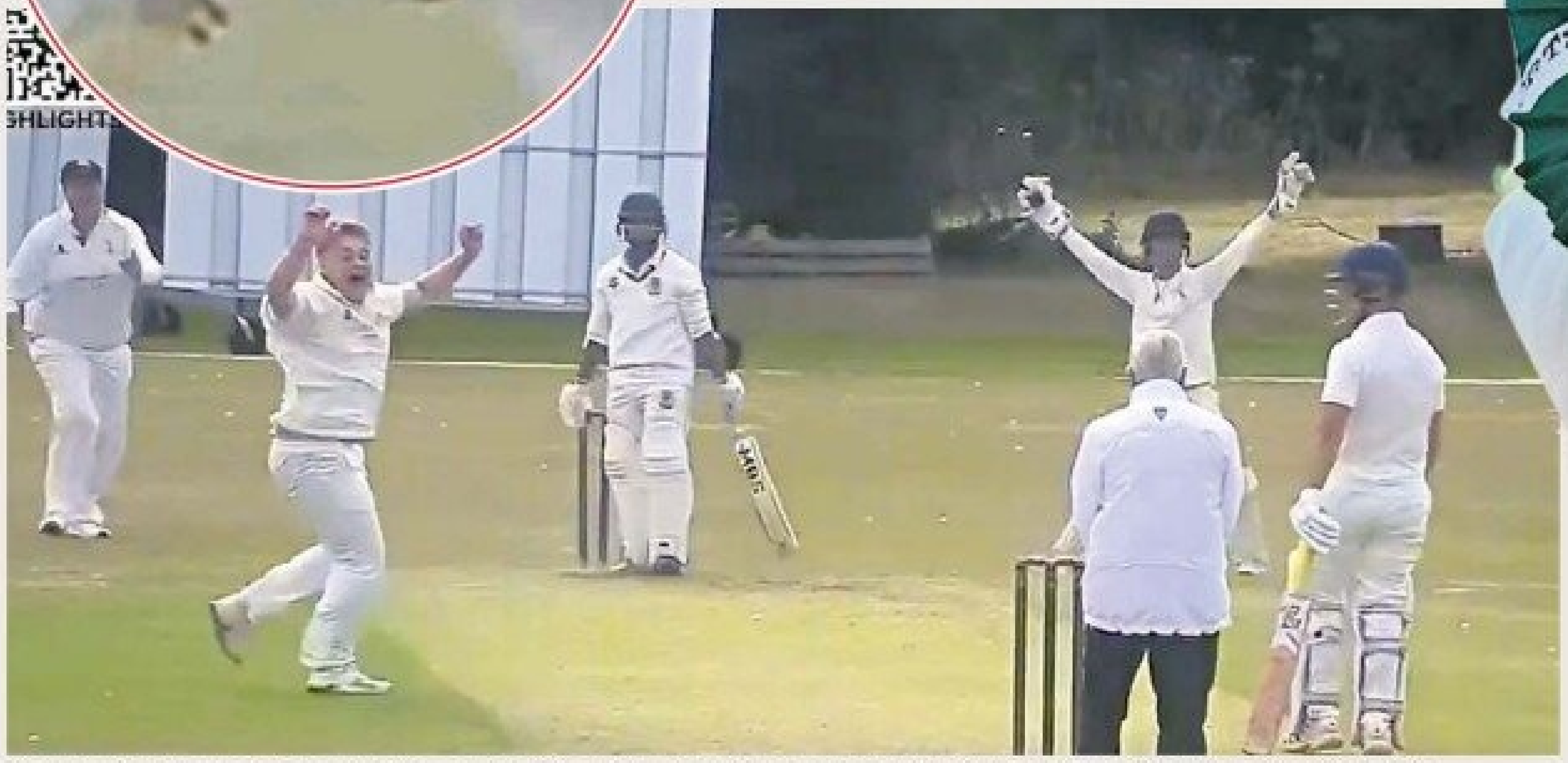
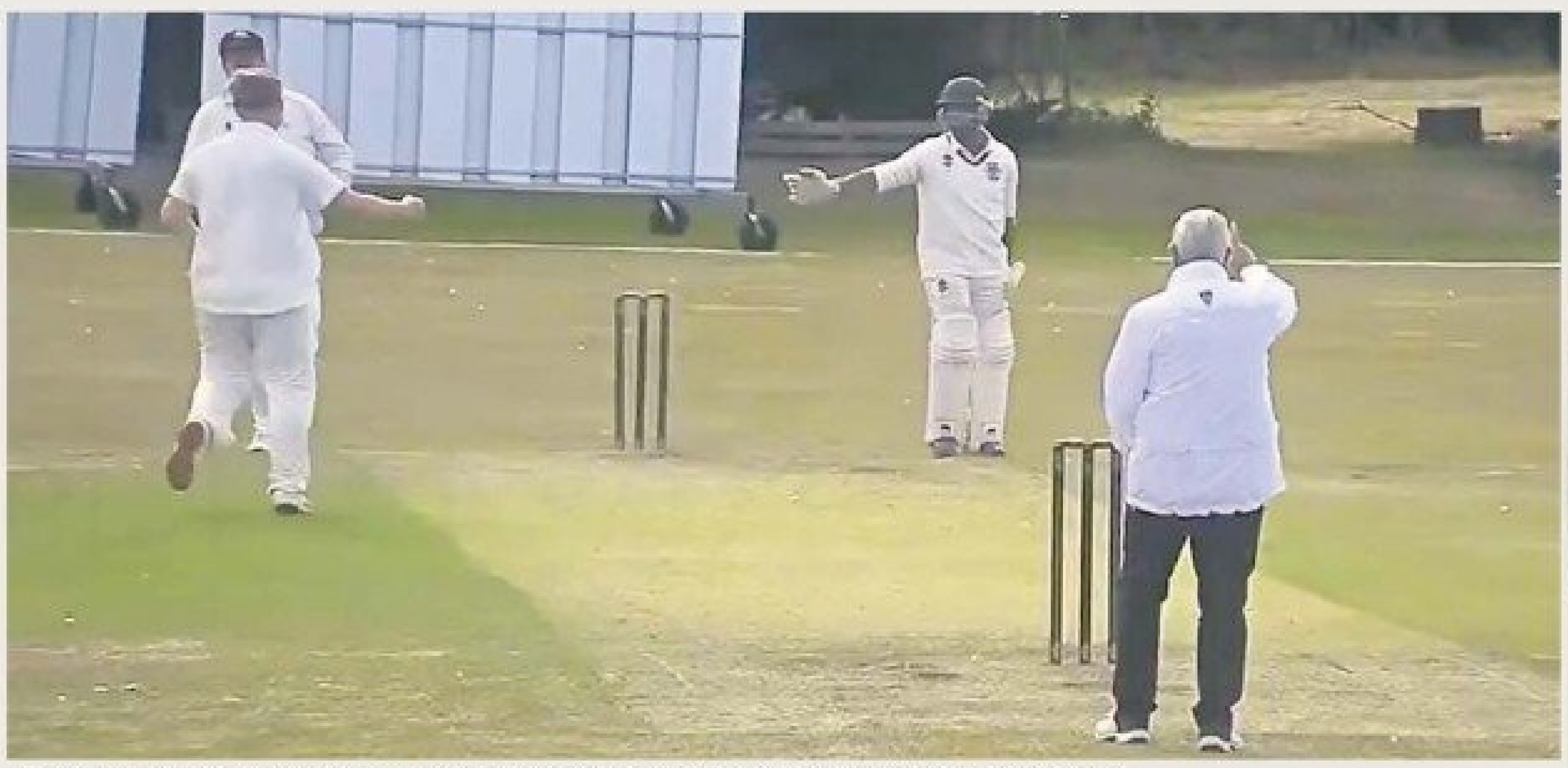


As the Norton CC batsman fends at the ball, Brian Devine's hands move from his knees. He can be seen clicking his fingers as the ball passes the bat, mimicking the sound of an edge.



Devine, Josh Bowes (the wicketkeeper) and Sam Morrison (the bowler), raise their arms in celebration after the ball is caught behind, and the umpire – thinking he has heard a nick – raises his finger to give the batsman out.



But Noman Shabir, the batsman, certain he has not nicked the ball, confronts the slip fielder. He can be seen approaching the umpire to plead his case as the other team celebrate, but to no avail.

A different spin? Cricket's history with bending the rules

1817: Everyone playing to lose
England played Nottinghamshire in one of the biggest matches of the summer in 1817. But the game descended into a farce as players from both teams had been paid by gamblers to lose, creating a ludicrous spectacle: bowlers trying not to take wickets, against batsmen trying to get out.

1979: Lillee's aluminium bat
Graeme Monaghan, a friend of the Australia great Dennis Lillee, started to produce aluminium cricket bats. Against England at Perth in 1979, Lillee, Australia's No10, walked out using one of these bats as a publicity stunt. The bat was not illegal, but the umpire did make Lillee change his bat as it was damaging the ball.

2018: Sandpapergate
In March 2018 in Cape Town, with Australia struggling in the Test, TV cameras saw Cameron Bancroft applying sandpaper to the ball – seemingly in an attempt to roughen the ball and thereby help the bowlers generate reverse swing. Steve Smith, the Australia captain, said that the plan was hatched by the team's "leadership group". Smith and David Warner were suspended by Cricket Australia for a year. Bancroft received a nine-month suspension.

It's just not click-it: Cheating fielder caught out

Village cricketer nicknamed 'Clicky Ponting' after video shows him snapping his fingers to dismiss batsmen

By **Will Macpherson**
and **Ben Rumsby**

A CHEATING row has erupted in club cricket after a fielder was accused of clicking his fingers to trick umpires into thinking there was an edge off the bat.

An investigation has been launched into the incident at Saltburn Cricket Club in North Yorkshire, after footage appeared online that raised suspicion.

In several videos, Saltburn's second XI slip fielder appears to click his fingers as the ball passes the bat, imitating the sound of the ball clipping the edge. The umpire then gives the bemused batsman out caught behind.

The initial footage was from last weekend's North Yorkshire and South Durham League (NYSD) match against Norton CC. Saltburn – who are top of the league – won that match by a thumping 159 runs, but other examples appearing to show the same issue have since surfaced.

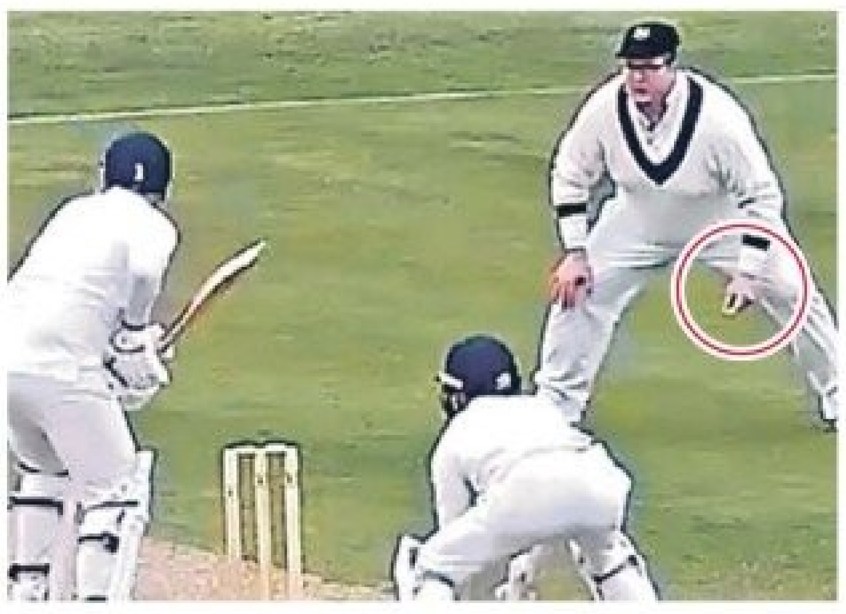
Brian Devine – the fielder at the centre of the scandal – has now been nicknamed "Clicky Ponting", a nod to the former Australian captain Ricky Ponting.

Past scorecards reveal that when Devine plays, Saltburn's wicketkeeper takes more catches. In 13 matches across 2026 with Devine in the side, Saltburn's keeper has taken 39 catches. In seven matches without Devine, the wicketkeeper has taken five.

The scorecard from the previous weekend's match against Shildon Railway CC shows that Saltburn seconds' wicketkeeper took eight catches, and he appears to be averaging almost four per match in his eight games this season.

Devine works for Northallerton Auctions Limited, a livestock auction house and estate agents, where he works as company secretary. On his company profile, Devine is said to be "a native Teessider, recently returned to the area having spent the previous nine years in Leeds".

It adds he has "a strong background in financial management built up from a wealth of industry sectors". Devine's actions were largely condemned by cricket fans including Piers Morgan.



Video footage from a game in 2024 also appears to show Brian Devine, above right, clicking his fingers to fool the umpire

The broadcaster posted on social media: "Outrageous cheating, and just the tip of the iceberg from all that's come out since it was exposed. Clicky Ponting (as he is now known) and various team-mates at Saltburn CC, have clearly been at this shameful scam for years. Imagine doing this in local amateur cricket? Pathetic."

The NYSD confirmed that it was investigating the matter. In a statement to *Telegraph Sport*, it said: "The League have received a formal complaint regarding alleged incidents in a Division Two game on Saturday. A full investigation has been initiated."

The incident provoked a fierce reaction on social media. Ben Mummery, the X user who first brought the incident to light, described it as "the worst case of cheating I've ever seen in cricket".

In response, Rory Cotterill, who had captained Middlesbrough CC's second XI in a 29-run defeat against Saltburn in June, alleged that there were two further incidents in that match, both involving teenage batsmen.

'Outrageous cheating… Imagine doing this in local amateur cricket? Pathetic'

Cotterill posted: "Boro 2s [captain] here, was two more incidents during this game, leading to a 15- and 16-year-old being cheated out of an innings, along with this one. I was at the non-strikers end at the time unknowingly watching them cheat in real time."

In response to Cotterill's message, another video was posted that appeared to show Devine doing the same when stood at silly point.

Saltburn CC was approached for comment, as was Devine. Neither have responded at the time of publishing.

Devine, a 38-year-old father of one, is a veteran club cricketer. His mother-in-law, Georgina Vaughan, told the *Daily Mail* that he was a "man of integrity". She said: "It was only a little village cricket match and now it's become this thing that's all over social media."

In defence of cricket cheats, by Michael Henderson: Page 15

MCC could put ladies before lords to increase female membership

By **Tony Diver** POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) could seek an exemption to the law that would allow women to skip its full membership queue.

Women were first allowed to join the MCC in 1998, but it can take 30 years to gain full membership, meaning there are still relatively few women in the club. The 239-year-old institution is now consulting members on a variety of diversity schemes to increase its female membership, which stands at 3.2 per cent.

Proposals include fast-tracking women through the waiting list, overtaking men who have waited decades for the privilege.

However, the club's lawyers are concerned its diversity drive will qualify as "positive action", which would count as illegal discrimination against men.

A consultation sent to members said the MCC could seek an exemption to the law to allow it to breach the Equality Act 2010 to get more female members.

Other proposals under consideration include allocating new memberships on a 50:50 gender split, and allowing members to nominate more candidates if they include women on their lists.

Reform has urged the MCC to abandon the plan, insisting it goes against the "very essence" of cricket: "fair play".

The document, seen by *The Telegraph*, warned that "any efforts by MCC to address gender diversity within the membership that involve giving preferential treatment to female candidates over male candidates are likely to fall within the scope of positive action".

A similar scheme by Melbourne Cricket Club, which allowed women to skip the membership queue, was struck down by an Australian court in 2006 for unlawfully discriminating against men.

To overcome the problem, the club has been lobbied by some members to seek a private bill from Parliament, allowing the MCC to breach the law. Private bills are rare, but can be used to grant specific legal powers to individuals or organisations.

They were used in the 19th century to grant permission for companies to build railways, docks and harbours.

However Robert Jenrick, the Reform UK economy spokesman, said: "Fair play is the very essence of cricket. That the home of cricket believes that it should be exempted from laws against discrimination so that it can put men at the back of the queue shows just how mad parts of this country have become."

The MCC's consultation closes on Friday.

Robert Lawson, the MCC's chief executive and secretary, told *The Telegraph*: "We will carefully review all perspectives provided in the consultation.

"We are not looking to pursue a private bill, but are aware it's an option.

"Any final decision will be made by our members."

Blatter: Nobody has the right to sell the game of football

Continued from Page 1

frequently than every four years. The move would also include the women's World Cup and Club World Cup.
Fifa's commercial rights spanning broadcast, sponsorship, ticketing and licensing would be privately owned under the plans. One senior football figure said of Mr Infantino: "He has definitely lost his mind. We will fight it fiercely."

Another source in European football said: "This is one man trying to make himself incredibly rich. Fifa doesn't need the money, nor do the member associations as they have plenty from the World Cup."

Sepp Blatter, the former Fifa president, joined the backlash last night. "The close relationship between the Fifa president and the US president has reached a financial dimension that is deeply damaging football," he wrote on X. "No one has the right to sell our game."

Uefa said in a statement: "This crosses a line that football's governing institutions should never cross. Uefa takes it extremely seriously. So should every national football association. So should every stakeholder: leagues, clubs, players, supporters, governments and everyone who cares about the future of the game. The soul and governance of football are not assets to trade – especially with zero transparency as to who gains financially. None of us are the owners of football. It is not Fifa's to sell."

Fifa said in a press release: "[It] intends to expand football development funding to more than $10bn (£7.5bn), subject to approval by Fifa member associations. If approved, football development in every corner of the world would benefit immediately from increased funding available to all 211 Fifa member associations."

The Fifa Forward Enterprise (FFE) project, which would consolidate commercial and event operations, "would raise up to $4.2bn later this year", projections said. Numbers are based on an initial equity valuation of $20bn (£15bn) "by carefully selecting long-term investors who will purchase minority, non-controlling interests in FFE".

The Times and *Financial Times* were first to report the outline plans. Fifa has denied claims Mr Infantino was being lined up to become chief executive of the new entity, but he would expect to bank millions of pounds if he took up such a role.

"However, the Fifa president and the Fifa administration will and must have leading roles in this entity – if approved – to always be in control of any Fifa subsidiary in accordance with Fifa's statutes and regulations for the benefit of Fifa member associations," a statement added.

The governing body said that "Jared Kushner is not an investor" and also denied suggestions staff had signed non-disclosure agreements.

Parents of apprentices given extra benefits

Families on Universal Credit to get £4,500 a year as part of plan to tackle youth unemployment

By **Nick Gutteridge**
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PARENTS on benefits will be given £4,500 a year if their children become apprentices.

Ministers said the new bursaries were part of plans to create 50,000 new apprenticeships and stop school leavers falling into a life on benefits.

Alongside the bursaries, grants worth £8,000 will be given to small and medium-sized businesses that take on apprentices. The combined cost of the new plans is up to £1bn. Almost a million under-25s are classified as not in employment, education or training, many of whom are on benefits.

Ministers have been told that the welfare system is putting some teenagers off taking up job opportunities by punishing them financially if they do so.

Parents can claim Universal Credit payments for their children up to the age of 18, but those handouts are withdrawn if they take up an apprenticeship. As a result, families can lose out on almost £100 a week.

Under the new scheme, they will be able to apply for a bursary from the Government that will effectively compensate them for the loss of benefits during their child's training.

Pat McFadden, the Work and Pensions Secretary, said the changes would help ensure the welfare system was a "springboard to opportunity, not a barrier to it". The announcement followed a pledge by Andy Burnham, the Prime Minister, "to get the number of young people who are not in education, employment and training down".

Speaking during a visit to Derby yesterday, Mr Burnham said: "I cannot accept the situation where we have so many young people in their 20s on benefits."

'I cannot accept the situation where we have so many young people in their 20s on benefits'

The social security advisory committee, a quango that advises ministers on welfare policy, has previously warned of an "apprenticeship cliff-edge".

It found that a single parent with a child aged 16 or 17 who has a sickness or disability could lose £339.92 a week if their teenager started an apprenticeship.

If the teenager were paid the expected apprentice salary of £258 per week, then the household would face a net loss of around £80. But there are questions over whether the proposals are properly funded. It later emerged that parts of the package recycled initiatives that had already been announced by Sir Keir.

The plan to pay small and medium sized business up to £8,000 to hire young workers were set out by the former prime minister earlier this year.

Similarly, Mr Burnham's administration touted a National Insurance waiver for companies who employ young apprentices which was actually a Starmer policy.

The Department for Work and Pensions could not say how much the bursary scheme will cost as it will depend on how many families apply.

Some of the money for the scheme comes from a £1bn pot that Sir Keir Starmer earmarked in March for the creation of 200,000 new jobs and apprenticeships. Part of the pot was also to pay small and medium sized companies £2,000 for taking on any new worker under the age of 25.

'Britain will value the hard hat every bit as much as the graduation cap'

Other funding will come from a separate £1bn apprenticeships fund unveiled by Sir Keir in May. Officials insisted the plans were fully costed.

The announcement comes after Mr Burnham called time on Sir Tony Blair's vision of getting half of young people to attend university.

He said a generation of school leavers had been "let down" by the narrow focus on higher education rather than trades and that, under his leadership, Britain would "value the hard hat every bit as much as the graduation cap".

Teenagers aged 14 and above will be offered the chance to study technical qualifications such as bricklaying.

Why Burnham's 'hard hat' school revolution is doomed to fail

By **Albert Tait** EDUCATION EDITOR

ANDY BURNHAM'S plan to tackle youth unemployment faces an uphill battle to get off the ground.

In a scheme to be rolled out from September 2028, pupils aged 14 and older will be able to gain technical qualifications alongside core subjects such as English, maths and science, and undertake work experience with local businesses.

Mr Burnham insists that under his leadership Britain will "value the hard hat every bit as much as the graduation cap" and has said the shift toward technical education is "long overdue".

But education unions and politicians have raised concerns that the scheme has not been fully thought through.

Here, *The Telegraph* looks at five reasons why it may be a non-starter.

'We've been here before'

Mr Burnham's government is by no means the first to have committed to expanding technical education over the past decade. Successive Tory prime ministers and chancellors have pledged similar schemes in an attempt to tackle youth unemployment but none have had the desired effect.

In his 2017 Budget, Philip Hammond announced the introduction of T-levels, technical qualifications to serve as an alternative to A-levels for 16 to 19-year-olds.

They launched in 2020, and, almost a decade later, there are more than 21 courses at around 360 colleges, schools and other providers across England. However, the initiative has not been as successful as ministers hoped.

The Department for Education (DfE) had originally aimed for 100,000 enrolments by September 2025, but the actual figure was just over 27,000.

After becoming prime minister in July 2019, Mr Johnson introduced the Lifetime Skills Guarantee scheme, which offered technical education courses to adults without an A-level, but there was ultimately no major funding boost to increase technical education for teenagers under his tenure.

During his Conservative Party conference speech in 2023, Rishi Sunak pledged to replace A-levels and T-levels with a new single "advanced British standard" qualification. His plans were ultimately scrapped when the Tories lost the 2024 general election.

In 2025, Sir Keir Starmer scrapped Labour's target of getting 50 per cent of young adults into higher education - originally set by Sir Tony Blair in 1999 – in favour of more apprenticeships and technical education.

He announced the Government would invest almost £800m extra into 16 to 19 education in 2026, including the creation of 14 new technical excellence colleges. "While you will never hear me denigrate the aspiration to go to university, I don't think the way we currently measure success in education – that ambition to get 50 per cent of kids to uni – I don't think that's right for our times," he said at the time.

Suella Braverman, Reform UK's education spokesman, questioned why Mr Burnham's scheme would succeed where others have failed. She said: "For too long, the philosopher has been valued more than the plumber. We welcome any effort to rebalance the scales, but we've been here before. Successive prime ministers have promised parity of esteem and failed to deliver."

TEMILADE ADELAJA/PA WIRE

Prime Minister Andy Burnham at Alstom Transport in Derby yesterday at the launch of his new technical educational pathways

Funding concerns

It is understood that Mr Burnham's scheme will be paid for by previously announced funding increases, including a proposed increase to the Department for Education's budget to £4.7bn by 2028-29.

But Saqib Bhatti MP, the shadow education minister, said the £4.7bn increase was needed to deal with the "existing pressures" on the DfE's already overstretched budget and that diverting funds into Mr Burnham's new scheme "simply doesn't add up".

"Technical education is vital, but you can't build a world-class skills system on empty promises," he said.

Success relies on thriving industries

As mayor of Greater Manchester in 2023, Mr Burnham launched the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc), a technical education alternative to the academic English Baccalaureate aimed at pupils aged 14 and over.

It is a similar scheme to what he is proposing now, a qualification that promises English, maths and science alongside specialist subjects aligned to the region's key growth sectors, such as construction and the green economy, and creative and cultural industries.

The MBacc is largely deemed to have been a success, but it remains unclear how successful Mr Burnham's new scheme will be in other cities and towns. Laura Trott, the shadow education secretary, said: "If local economies start dictating the curriculum, then in areas with fewer opportunities we risk creating a lower ceiling for children."

'Technical education is vital, but you can't build a world-class skills system on empty promises'

School subjects may suffer

Concerns have been raised about whether schools will have to drop subjects to accommodate the initiative. Pepe Di'Iasio, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said it was "not yet clear what the government will ask schools and colleges to do less of in the coming years".

Ofsted grading changes unclear

Under the Prime Minister's plans, Ofsted, the education watchdog, will be told to change the way it grades schools so that they are given greater credit for offering technical courses and preparing their students for the world of work. But it remains unclear how these plans will operate.

If Prime Minister cuts welfare then we will rebel, warn Labour MPs

By **Dominic Penna**
SENIOR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR MPs have threatened to rebel if Andy Burnham makes "punitive" cuts to welfare.

The Prime Minister is planning to strip young people of their benefits unless they agree to do training or voluntary work under proposals to reduce the £333bn welfare bill.

However, backbenchers on the party's Left have warned Mr Burnham against repeating the "failed politics of welfare cuts".

Sir Keir Starmer suffered a revolt by more than 120 of his MPs last year when he sought to tighten the rules around disability benefits.

Kim Johnson, the MP for Liverpool Riverside, and John McDonnell, Jeremy Corbyn's former shadow chancellor, have warned Pat McFadden, the Work and Pensions Secretary, and Mr Burnham against the sweeping cuts.

Both MPs were among the opponents of Sir Keir's ill-fated attempt to cut the disability benefits budget by £5bn a year last summer.

Ms Johnson told Bloomberg: "If the new leadership believes it can revive the failed politics of welfare cuts instead of asking the wealthiest to pay their fair share, it will be repeating not only Keir Starmer's mistakes but 14 years of Tory austerity.

"If the first instinct of a new leadership is to target disabled people and low-income families rather than challenge the wealth and inequality at the top of society, then nothing has been learnt."

Mr McDonnell, a Labour backbencher, added that any welfare reform "must be based upon a strategy of providing positive support to people rather than punitive sanction".

£333bn

The welfare bill that Prime Minister Andy Burnham wants to slash by stripping young people of benefits

The welfare rebellion in the Commons last July is widely regarded as the moment Sir Keir's remaining political authority drained away, as he was forced into a "farcical climbdown".

The then prime minister was regarded as having "bottled" the chance to reform welfare payments. After weeks of backlash, he was forced to water down the proposals.

Rachael Maskell, one of the most prominent critics of Sir Keir's welfare reforms, told *The Telegraph*: "This should be a proper discussion about how we do this incredibly well. It shouldn't be about punitive measures.

"It must be about positive engagement and to recognise that for some young people, this is going to take longer than for other young people. Some people as we know in life just need a hand up and a bit of help, others will need significant input."

Ms Maskell tabled an amendment last summer that would have killed Sir Keir's legislation before it was rewritten. She proceeded to vote against diluted benefits proposals, resulting in her temporary suspension from Labour.

Ms Maskell added: "We want as many people to work as possible and we know that one million young people have been failed and it's failed with not only being able to get the support with their mental health."

She said the education system was not meeting the needs of young people and they were bearing the consequences.

Scrap stamp duty for over-65s to turbocharge housing market

By **Emma Taggart**
ECONOMICS REPORTER

ANDY BURNHAM has been urged to cut stamp duty for over-65s to boost the nation's sluggish property market.

Pensioners should receive the same stamp duty relief as first-time buyers to encourage them to sell larger family homes and downsize, according to a new report from think tank Radix Big Tent's housing commission.

First time buyers in England and Northern Ireland pay no stamp duty when buying properties worth up to £300,000. Stamp duty is then levied at a 5 per cent rate between £300,000 and £500,000, at which point the relief ends.

For all other buyers, stamp duty is paid on property sales upwards of £125,000, with the rate levied on a sliding scale of 2 per cent to 12 per cent based on the home's value.

The housing commission said the cost of stamp duty was stopping older people from downsizing.

It said expanding the stamp duty relief to pensioners could bring up to 870,000 family homes back onto the nation's property market.

The business-led commission was launched in 2024 to develop policies aimed at tackling the nation's housing crisis and a number of its previous recommendations have been adopted by the Government.

Alex Notay, the chairman of the housing commission, said the UK faced "a stark and growing generational housing divide".

The commission found that over-60s now hold a record £2.89tn in housing wealth, more than half of the UK's total property wealth.

'We have to be more radical if we are really going to get the housing market moving again'

Ms Notay said that encouraging downsizing would help to rebalance the country's property wealth and help growing families move into bigger homes.

The English Housing Survey found that around 70 per cent of over-65s live in properties with more bedrooms than they need.

The report comes just days after speculation emerged that Mr Burnham would scrap stamp duty and council tax, replacing the levies with an annual property tax.

Mr Burnham then rowed back on the reports and ruled out making any changes to stamp duty in the upcoming Budget.

Ben Rich, the chief executive of Radix Big Tent, said: "We have to be more radical if we are really going to get the housing market moving again, which means incentivising older people to find homes better suited to their needs."

Polling carried out by the Family Building Society, a member of the housing commission, found that 50 per cent of over-65s see paying stamp duty on a property purchase as a reason not to move home.

Economists and policymakers from across the political spectrum agree that stamp duty weighs on the property market by preventing Britons from moving.

A Treasury spokesman said: "As has always been the case, decisions on tax are a matter for the Chancellor to set out at fiscal events, rather than routinely commenting on rumour, speculation or proposals."

Munchetty quits BBC Breakfast after bullying allegations

Presenter will still face early starts with her new role hosting Radio 5 Live show next year

By **Anita Singh** *and* **Ruby Cline**

NAGA MUNCHETTY is quitting *BBC Breakfast* after a year in which the programme was mired in allegations of bullying.

The presenter, one of the corporation's highest-paid stars with a salary of £365,000, will move to a new role in January hosting the Radio 5 Live breakfast show.

She will take over from Rachel Burden and Rick Edwards, with a co-host who will be announced in due course.

The atmosphere on *BBC Breakfast*, based in Salford, has been described as "toxic". Munchetty was said to be on barely speaking terms with the programme's editor, Richard Frediani, and keen for a new job.

Naga Munchetty, 51, has worked on BBC Breakfast for 17 years

Munchetty spent 17 years at *BBC Breakfast* but over the past year reportedly faced allegations that she had bullied junior staffers.

Insiders say she was accused of "humiliating" one female colleague and reprimanding an intern for incorrectly spreading Marmite on her toast. There were also reports of tensions between Munchetty and co-host, Charlie Stayt.

And at 5 Live, where Munchetty hosts a mid-morning talk show, newspaper reports alleged that she made a "crass, inappropriate and wildly unprofessional" off-air reference to a sex act, which earned her a telling-off from bosses in 2022.

Munchetty, 51, has never commented on the allegations. The BBC reportedly launched a review into the claims against her last year. The outcome was not made public but sources told *The Telegraph* that there is no investigation ongoing.

Her strained relationship with Frediani was also said to be an issue behind the scenes.

Frediani himself faced bullying accusations, said to include shouting and swearing at colleagues. He was cleared of wrongdoing in an internal HR review and remains in charge of the show.

Munchetty's permanent move to 5 Live is a solution that satisfies both the presenter and her bosses, sources said.

"There is definitely an atmosphere on *Breakfast*. It's an unhappy place. Naga will be happier at 5 Live," an insider said. The station regards Munchetty's move to its flagship breakfast show as a "coup".

Munchetty has also been at the centre of on-air controversy during her time on the sofa.

In 2019, she was found to have breached BBC guidelines for suggesting that Donald Trump was racist when he told four US congresswomen of colour to "go back" where they came from. The director-general, Lord Hall of Birkenhead, then stepped in to reverse the decision.

In 2021, she and Stayt were "spoken to and reminded of their responsibilities" after mocking Robert Jenrick for displaying a large Union Flag in his office. Munchetty also "liked" a social media post which made fun of "flag shaggers".

Munchetty will host the new 5 Live breakfast show for five days a week. The station is based in Salford but Munchetty has struck a deal to present two days a week from London, to be closer to her Hertfordshire home.

Munchetty currently presents her 5 Live mid-morning show from Monday to Wednesday and *BBC Breakfast* from Thursday to Saturday.

Last year she was the eighth highest-paid presenter at the BBC, on £365,000. Her salary should fall when she changes jobs as she will work five days per week rather than six . However, she may have the opportunity to bump her earnings back up with other TV work or radio specials.

Burden, who earned £220,000 as 5 Live breakfast co-host, said she had decided it was time for a change after 15 years. She will move to the station's 11am-2pm slot.

John McAndrew, director of BBC live and daily news, said that Munchetty would be "hugely missed" by viewers.

SIEGFRIED ANTHONY/VARIETY VIA GETTY IMAGES

Apple never falls far from the tree Kaia Gerber looks the spitting image of her mother Cindy Crawford, below, at the world premiere of television drama *The Shards* in New York. The show follows a group of school students in Los Angeles in 1981, whose lives intertwine with that of a serial killer.

Britons opt for Netflix over BBC when they reach for the remote

By **James Warrington**
MEDIA AND TELECOMS EDITOR

MORE BRITONS now turn to Netflix than the BBC when they switch on the TV as the embattled broadcaster struggles to hold its ground against streaming rivals.

More than a quarter of viewers – 26 per cent – say Netflix is their first choice when looking for something to watch, according to new figures from Ofcom.

That is just ahead of the BBC, which is the first choice for 25 per cent of viewers, while ITV lags behind on 15 per cent. Ofcom's findings underscore the scale of the challenge facing the BBC in an increasingly fierce battle against deep-pocketed streaming rivals.

The BBC's struggles come amid a broader decline for traditional TV.

While an average of 70 per cent of the population watched broadcast TV last year, that was down from 73 per cent in 2024 and 78 per cent in 2022.

As a result, overall viewing time for broadcasters – which includes public service TV as well as digital channels – fell by 11 minutes to two hours and 19 minutes per person per day as the decline in live viewing offset growth in their streaming services.

Netflix remains the most popular streaming service in the UK, with more than 18 million UK households now signed up to Netflix, though subscriber growth has started to flatline across all streaming services and revenue growth has largely been achieved through price rises.

> 'Broadcasters are showing resilience with the power to bring us together for big, national moments'

The report also found that the BBC continues to dominate major national events and TV moments. While Netflix had the two most-watched programmes in 2025 with *KPop Demon Hunters* and *Adolescence*, the BBC claimed eight of the 10 most-watched programmes in the first three months of this year, including *The Traitors* and *The Night Manager*.

The BBC also pulled in a peak audience of 24 million for England's World Cup semi-final defeat to Argentina – the biggest live television event of the year.

Kate Davies, the head of strategy and research at Ofcom, said: "As audiences increasingly benefit from an incredible choice of content, competition between traditional broadcasters, streaming services, video sharing platforms and other forms of digital media is fierce.

"But in face of these challenges, traditional broadcasters are showing resilience with the power to bring millions of us together to watch or listen for big, national moments, as well as growing their digital offerings."

Tom Cruise's estranged daughter drops his surname after falling out

By **Emily Smith**

TOM CRUISE'S daughter has legally dropped her father's surname.

The 20-year-old student has changed her name from Suri Cruise to Suri Noelle, adopting her mother's middle name.

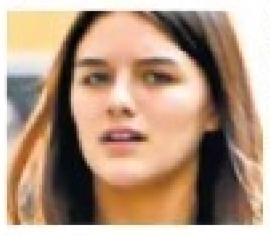
The name change is the latest in a breakdown of relations between the father and daughter, who last appeared publicly together over a decade ago.

The Top Gun star welcomed Suri with fellow actress Katie Holmes in 2006. The couple later divorced in 2012.

Mr Cruise also has two adopted children with Nicole Kidman, 33-year-old Isabella and 31-year-old Connor.

The actor remains close with his adopted children, however, he is believed to be estranged from his youngest daughter.

The two have not been seen publicly since 2012 and neither has spoken about their relationship.



Suri Noelle, formerly Suri Cruise, has adopted her mother's middle name

Public voter registration records in Pennsylvania, where Ms Noelle attends Carnegie Mellon University, suggest she is now legally registered under the new name.

US residents are required to register to vote with their legal name.

Page Six also reported that she did not file the name change in Allegheny County, which suggests she may have done so at home in New York with her mother. The 20-year-old has lived with her mother, who has full custody, in New York for the last 14 years.

According to reports, she became known as Suri Noelle because she wanted to "avoid the paparazzi" and create her "own identity" away from her father.

The musical theatre student first publicly appeared as "Suri Noelle" during her high school graduation in 2024.

Two months after her graduation, her mother made rare comments about her daughter to *Town & Country Magazine*. She said: "I'm proud of my daughter. Of course, I will miss the close proximity, but I'm really proud of her and I'm happy.

"I remember being this age, this time of beginnings. It's exciting to learn about yourself, and I loved that time, so it makes me happy to think about it like that."

Reports suggest the *Mission Impossible* star's devotion to Scientology could be the reason behind his daughter's estrangement.

Mr Cruise is one of the most high-profile followers of the mysterious and controversial religion.

Double trouble: Hammond caught speeding in Porsche and Bentley

By **Telegraph Reporter**

RICHARD HAMMOND has been fined £999 after he was caught speeding twice within three weeks in his Porsche and Bentley.

West Mercia Police brought two prosecutions against the former *Top Gear* host using speed camera images of him driving the cars in Herefordshire in December 2025.

Hammond, 56, who hosted the BBC motoring show with Jeremy Clarkson and James May before the trio launched *The Grand Tour* on Amazon Prime, pleaded guilty through his lawyers to two charges of speeding.

At Telford magistrates' court last week, he was handed seven penalty points and ordered to pay £1,771, comprising two fines of £333 and £666, £240 in costs, and victim surcharges of £532.

68mph | 50mph zone Dec 2, 2025

82mph | 70mph zone Dec 22, 2025

Hammond, nicknamed the Hamster during his *Top Gear* days, nearly died in a jet-powered car in 2006 after it crashed at 320mph while filming.

He and Clarkson received a three-month driving ban in France in 2013 after they were caught speeding while making an episode of the show.

In the latest incidents, court documents showed Hammond was caught by an officer with a handheld speed camera at just before 1pm on Dec 2 last year. His Porsche Taycan Cross Turismo was clocked at 68mph in a 50mph zone on the A40 in Pencraig, Herefordshire.

At about 11.45am on Dec 22, Hammond's Bentley Continental GT was speeding at 82mph in a 70mph limit on the A50 Rudhall Bridge, also in Herefordshire. Police sent speeding tickets to a Grade II-listed Herefordshire castle, bought by Hammond in 2012, and a £1m farm estate near Hereford. But the letters were returned marked as "addressee gone away". He was eventually reached at his £2m home near Abergavenny, Wales, where it was noted more than 30 vehicles were registered.

Police also set out in court papers that Hammond had been accused of another driving offence last August.

Hammond was prosecuted for two offences of speeding and two further allegations, that he had ignored the police letters and failed to identify himself as the guilty driver.

In a letter to the court, Hammond's solicitor pleaded guilty to the speeding charges and denied the other two offences, writing: "He replied identifying himself as the driver. He sent the reply by first-class post. He posted the reply himself."

Police withdrew the extra charges and Hammond was convicted of the speeding offences. Fines vary depending on the severity of offences.

It is not clear which category Hammond was fined for.

Philp: I was target of French warning shots

Shadow home secretary claims ship fired near him as he monitored illegal Channel crossings

By **Tom Cotterill** *and* **Charles Hymas**

CHRIS PHILP has accused the French military of "intimidation" after one of its ships opened fire near him while he was filming in the Channel.

The shadow home secretary was carrying out an interview with the BBC when the French vessel let off a volley of "17 live rounds".

Mr Philp, who was in the Channel monitoring illegal migrant crossings, claimed no warning had been given. The French military denied his claim, insisting that all the "regulatory signals and safety protocols were followed".

Mr Philp said: "We left Dover early this morning and we were about two miles off the French coast near Cap Grinez. There was a French warship patrolling in the vicinity. I was on the back of the boat doing an interview with the BBC as the French warship approached.

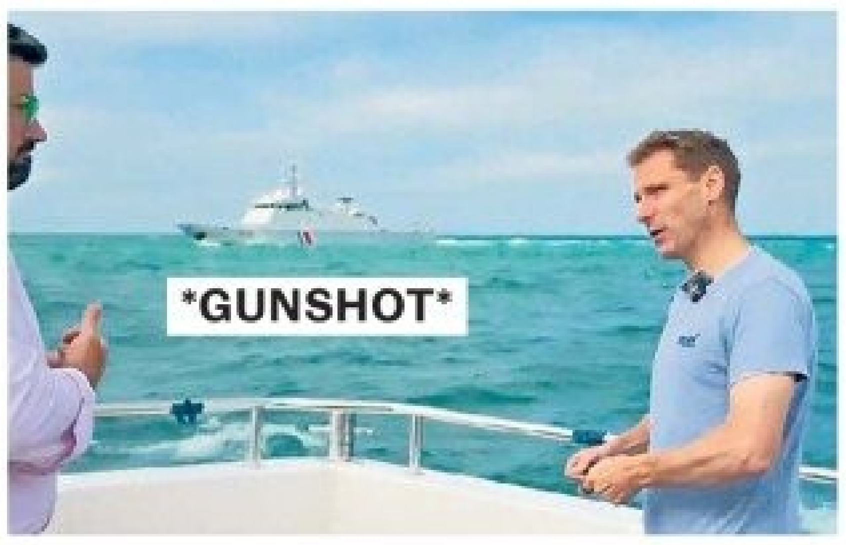
"As it came to its closest point of approach – about 300m away – it let off 17 live rounds from the back of the boat."

Mr Philp said the incident "felt to me it was warning shots or an attempt to intimidate". He added: "They were not firing before they approached, and nor were they firing after.

"The boat's skipper has never seen anything like this before. There was no notice in place about live-firing exercises. There was no warning over the radio or anything else."

It is understood that the Government contacted France to establish what happened.

A French official later said that sailors on board Flamant, a patrol ship, were carrying out routine handgun training at the time.



Chris Philp was being interviewed by the BBC when the live rounds were heard

"To maintain their high level of operational readiness in the current international context, French Navy units train regularly. Individual combat training is part of the normal operations of a ship on duty," a spokesman for the Channel and North Sea Maritime Prefecture said.

"The regulatory signals required by international standards for this firing exercise were displayed, and safety protocols were followed. This exercise is unrelated to the presence of a British vessel in the area, which was outside the firing range."

However, Mr Philp rejected the claims. He said: "It is not credible to claim this was a training exercise. There were no warnings in place about live-firing training exercises.

"They fired the live rounds at the closest point of approach to us – and didn't fire anything that we saw before or after. It looked and sounded exactly like deliberate intimidation."

Matt Coker, the captain of the fishing boat Mr Philp was sailing on, also said no warning was issued.

The 48-year-old said: "In 28 years on the sea, I've never encountered this sort of situation before – considering we were the only two boats in the area, it seems strange the shots were fired as the warship turned to pass close to us and during the interview."

Mr Philp said he would be speaking to the French ambassador about the incident.

The shadow home secretary later shared videos online of him following a "massive dingy full of illegal immigrants" after it was launched from the French coast into the Channel. He accused French authorities of "doing nothing to stop it".

The French Navy added the Flamant was "not engaged in an operation to intercept a migrant vessel". The ship was training off the coast of Cap de Gris-Nez, about 16 miles south of Calais in northern France. It is understood to have been towing a line behind it carrying a target, and French sailors were seen firing pistols towards it, in the opposite direction of Mr Philp's boat.

Navies, including Britain's, regularly carry out small-arms firing at sea. The training is seen as routine.

Such activity often comes with stringent safety measures, which includes assuring that no live rounds could inadvertently hit an unintended target such as another nearby vessel or the shore.

Last week, a Russian warship opened fire off the coast of Devon while being shadowed by HMS Tyne, a Royal Navy patrol ship.

> 'It is not credible to claim this was a training exercise. There were no warnings in place'

Earl Spencer has sold 310 acres of his family estate to property developers after the activity of fly-tippers and vandals left him unable to farm it. The land was sold to Persimmon Homes for £60m, which will be reinvested

ANDREW CROWLEY FOR THE TELEGRAPH

Earl Spencer: Fly-tippers have forced me to sell farmland

By **Victoria Ward**
DEPUTY ROYAL EDITOR

EARL SPENCER has sold 310 acres of land to property developers after fly-tippers and vandals left him unable to farm it.

The land in Dallington, Northamptonshire, sits alongside the family's Althorp estate and had been owned by the Spencers for generations.

However, it had become difficult to manage and was increasingly plagued by vandalism and fly-tipping, which had reached such extremes that, on one occasion, a pile of 60 burnt-out cars was found there. Last year, a 250-year-old farmhouse on the land was set on fire and needed to be pulled down. Lord Spencer, the brother of Diana, Princess of Wales, said: "My family long despaired at the impossibility of farming the land at Dallington, but is pleased that it now serves a fine purpose as a place for people to live and work."

Fly-tipping has increasingly plagued land around the Althorp estate

The land was sold to Persimmon Homes for £60m, which will be reinvested in the Althorp estate.

Some 1,800 homes will be built on the land, alongside a secondary school and two primary schools, with contributions towards healthcare, libraries and the road network. A further 150 acres on the development are held by West Northamptonshire Council.

Fly-tipping reports have surged across Britain and there are fears that criminal gangs see dumping rubbish illegally as a money-making scheme.

Andrew to be stripped of City of London freedom in final humiliation

By **Telegraph Reporter**

ANDREW MOUNTBATTEN-WINDSOR could be stripped of his freedom of the City of London, losing one of his final honours.

The King stripped his brother of his royal titles and honours last year because of his connection to Jeffrey Epstein, the paedophile financier.

He retains the freedom of the City of London, an award he received in 2021, because his father, Prince Philip, had been a freeman. The City of London Corporation, the area's local authority, is now drawing up plans to strip him of that honour.

In May, it criticised Mr Mountbatten-Windsor for failing to surrender his freedom of the City of London "despite being asked to do so".

It has emerged that the corporation is developing a process to remove Mr Mountbatten-Windsor's right to it, as there is no current mechanism allowing the body to do so. A City of London Corporation spokesman said: "Our thoughts remain with the victims of Jeffrey Epstein, and with all victims and survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation.

"We are developing a process that would allow the freedom of the City of London to be removed where appropriate, having determined that there is currently no effective lawful mechanism to do so.

"If elected members approve the new process, they will then consider whether Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor's freedom should be removed."

There has been some discussion that the corporation could draft a bill, which Parliament would have to pass, allowing it to strip Mr Mountbatten-Windsor of the honour. The spokesman suggested that the corporation would rather move at a quicker pace, carrying out its own process to allow the move.

The spokesman said: "We understand why people want this matter resolved as quickly as possible, and we share that desire. The fastest and most appropriate approach is to put in place a lawful process that allows the City corporation to make these decisions itself."

In a motion of censure passed in May, the City corporation's Court of Common Council said there was "profound disappointment" Mr Mountbatten-Windsor had not surrendered his freedom.

The City corporation's highest decision-making body said it lacked the power to remove it as Mr Mountbatten-Windsor's freedom "is not an honour or office but a property right protected under both domestic law and the European Convention on Human Rights".

Mr Mountbatten-Windsor was arrested in February, on his 66th birthday, on suspicion of misconduct in public office, following allegations he shared sensitive information with Epstein during his time as the UK's trade envoy.

He has not been charged with a crime and has always denied wrongdoing.

Ex-solicitor's cat seized by 'axe-wielding police' dies in RSPCA's care

By **Tom McArdle**

A FORMER solicitor'A former solicitor has accused the RSPCA of behaving like "Nazis" after her cat died in the charity's care.

Katherine Theodotou, 79, was already suing the animal charity and Metropolitan Police over a police raid on her north London home which saw her pet Rita taken away. Dr Theodotou insisted she was the victim of a "malicious report" to the RSPCA stating the 17-month-old cat was being mistreated.

Days before the fight over the ownership of her cat was due to go before magistrates, she was told Rita had died.

Dr Theodotou, a Cypriot living in north London, who founded a Greek school in Islington and runs an animal sanctuary near Hertford, has launched a High Court claim for the return of Rita's body.

"The police and RSPCA have behaved like a bunch of Nazis. I've never seen any such behaviour towards an elderly woman", she told *The Times*.

She said was distressed that the charity and officers "would behave in such a way towards a small cat who had been treated like a princess by me". She told the court: "I'm entitled to her body or what is left of her body. She is my cat, my darling cat. I love this animal very much.

"There was no need to come with six police officers to my house and break down the door. I'm entitled to have a post mortem [examination] myself."

Before Rita died, Dr Theodotou had been suing the charity and Scotland Yard, claiming six police officers had chopped through her front door with an axe and pushed her to the ground while seizing her cat. The RSPCA has insisted it acted in Rita's "best interests" after a report from vets who treated the cat.

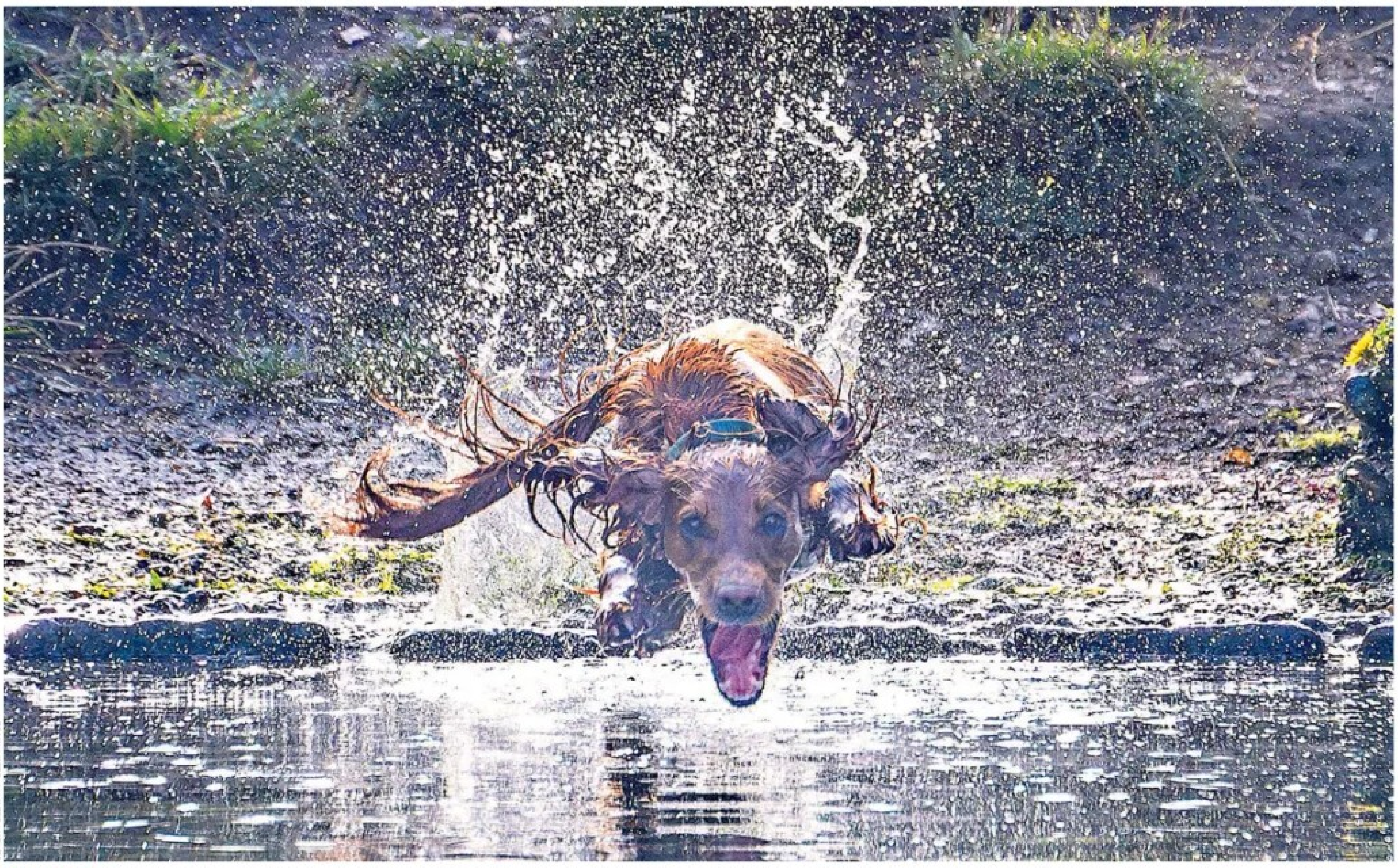
Dr Katherine Theodotou said police 'axed their way' into her home so the RSPCA could seize her cat

Dr Theodotou's lawyers insisted the cat's owner had spent "large sums of money" on private nurses and physio.

An earlier hearing was told Rita was born disabled and could not properly move her back legs and suffered from bladder infections.

Dr Theodotou's lawyers had sought an injunction to prevent the cat from being put down before trial. The RSPCA said there were no plans to euthanise the cat. However, the magistrates' court hearing was cancelled after Rita's unexplained death.

Passing judgment, Mr Justice Kimbmade an order for a jointly conducted post-mortem examination. Rachael Hyde, for the Metropolitan Police, said officers "lawfully executed a warrant of entry into the claimant's property".



On the fly A dog launches itself into the River Lea yesterday in an attempt to cool off at the start of another heatwave. Temperatures are to rise again today.

JEREMY SELWYN/ SELWYNPICS

New Forest pony round-up cancelled after flu outbreak

By **Telegraph Reporter**

THE traditional rounding up of ponies in the New Forest has been cancelled after an outbreak of equine flu.

The drifts in August have been cancelled after the rare, highly contagious flu spread in the New Forest National Park, Hampshire, for the first time in 30 years.

Around 35 free-roaming ponies have died from the virus so far, out of an estimated 5,000 grazing in the national park at any given time.

Between August and November every year, New Forest ponies are rounded up in drifts to gallop through the national park toward holding pens to have their health checked and for new foals to be branded.

Verderers of the New Forest, the governing body that protects traditional rights around agriculture in the area, have cancelled the drifts and put later round-ups under review. They say official veterinary advice is to leave the affected ponies where they are to avoid causing them unnecessary stress and potentially spreading the virus further.

In a statement, the Verderers said: "Due to the ongoing equine flu outbreak affecting the ponies in the New Forest, the Verderers have taken the decision to postpone the start of the 2026 drifts. There will be no drifts taking place in August. Drifts in September and onwards will be subject to ongoing review."

The virus causes a heavy nasal discharge and dry cough in ponies, and can lead to life-threatening secondary infections.

Hot hedgehogs hospitalised as heat spikes

Animal rescue centres at 'maximum capacity' with wildlife distressed by the record heatwave

By **Telegraph Reporter**

ANIMAL rescue centres are "fit to bursting" with hedgehogs and foxes suffering from heatstroke during one of the hottest summers on record, the RSPCA said. Gardeners are being asked to create shaded spaces for wildlife struggling to keep cool during the weather as the fourth heatwave of the year looms.

The animal welfare charity said two baby hedgehogs were found "in distress" in a back garden in Somerset and brought into the nearby West Hatch Wildlife Centre, where they are being cared for along with "several other recent admissions" related to the heat.

Temperatures are expected to peak as high as 35C across the South East today. Record-breaking temperatures were recorded in both May and June, and July has been 3C above average across the UK, according to provisional Met Office data on the month so far.

Recent research from veterinary group Inspiring Vet Care found that in June this year its clinics treated 179 cases of suspected heatstroke – 66 per cent higher than the 108 cases treated in the same month two years prior.

Some 316 hedgehogs have been admitted to RSPCA centres in June alone

Some 316 hedgehogs were admitted to the RSPCA's four wildlife centres in June, a 56 per cent rise on the 202 admitted in the same month the previous year.

Amy Ockelford, a senior press officer at the charity, said wildlife centres are "fit to bursting", and have seen an increase in admissions of hoglets and hedgehogs.

She said: "These animals are usually not out in the daytime, but they're coming out because they're struggling to find food and water, and ending up with heatstroke." Ms Ockelford has encouraged people to think about wildlife as well as pets, adding: "Keep out clean, cool water for wildlife and try to create shaded areas where you can for them to avoid the direct sun."

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has issued an amber heat-health alert for the East Midlands, East of England, South East and London. The agency warned that rising temperatures may increase health risks.

Weather: Page 28

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Mother killed toddler after 'catastrophic' life of abuse

Couple jailed for murder after two-year-old suffered sexual and physical abuse up until the day she died

By **Telegraph Reporter**

A MOTHER and her boyfriend are facing life in prison after murdering a two-year-old in a "catastrophic" campaign of abuse.

Isabelle Welsh suffered 21 broken bones in the weeks before she collapsed at her home in Thornaby, Teesside, last September.

Her mother, Alexandra Walker, 26, and 22-year-old Harrison Simpson have both been found guilty of murder and child cruelty. Simpson has also been convicted of sexual assault on the toddler, while Walker was cleared of that charge.

Isabelle was subjected to "catastrophic injuries" in the final weeks of her life, suffering sexual and physical abuse until the day she died.

She had suffered a head injury that was consistent with being hit against a hard surface such as a wall or the floor. The impact was so severe it stopped her heart.

The court previously heard that even as Isabelle lay dying, her mother waited just short of an hour before dialling 999. She Googled: "Why would my toddler be bleeding?"

Ms Justice Norton told the pair: "The only sentence I can pass is life imprisonment and that will be passed on each of you on Thursday. I will have to decide the minimum term each of you will spend in custody."

Outside court, Isabelle's father, Josh Welsh, said justice had been done and that his daughter's murderers deserved whole-life sentences.

Asked what she meant to him, Mr Welsh said: "My little girl… my whole life has been shattered, my whole family."

Teesside Crown Court previously heard there had been opportunities to save her from her tormentors, with medical professionals handing the tot back to her mother.

Just 11 days before her murder, Isabelle was taken to hospital by her mother from the family home in Thornaby.

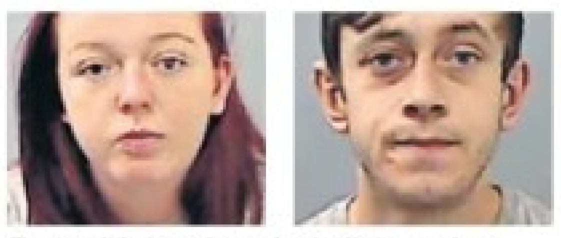
A&E staff at North Tees Hospital, Co Durham, did not want to allow Isabelle to leave with her mother after she was brought in with a leg fracture.

But doctors on a paediatric team overruled their concerns and said there was no evidence of abuse. Less than a fortnight later, she was brought in again.

A health visitor was contacted because of the hospital's concern about Isabelle. But she cleared Walker - based on a phone call.

Richard Wright KC, prosecuting, told the court: "Without actually visiting Isabelle or checking on her welfare, the health visitor concluded the call and noted that she had no concerns.

"Of course, she could not have known that the fractured leg was just one of numerous broken bones that Isabelle had suffered, nor that she was days away from sustaining a catastrophic and fatal head injury."



Facing life in prison, Isabelle's mother Alexandra Walker and Harrison Simpson

Isabelle also suffered 97 soft tissue injuries where she had been tightly held and shaken - and there was evidence from a pathologist to say she appeared to have been swung by a limb.

The court heard Isabelle died in the early hours of Sept 14 last year after being found by paramedics lying motionless at the foot of the stairs.

Her mother delayed calling for an ambulance and it was only when her stepfather arrived at her home and insisted emergency services were called that she rang for help.

Det Ch Insp Steve Chatterton, of Cleveland Police, said: "Isabelle suffered catastrophic injuries.Her life was cruelly taken in the most tragic and heartbreaking circumstances."

PICTURE: ENTERPRISE NEWS AND PICTURES

Isabelle Welsh, two, was left with 21 broken bones and 97 soft tissue injuries where she had been tightly held and shaken

Speedboat killer Shepherd struck partner with BBQ tongs

By **Telegraph Reporter**

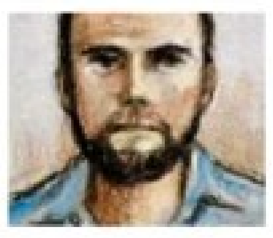
JACK SHEPHERD, the speedboat killer, has pleaded guilty to attacking his girlfriend with a set of barbecue tongs.

The 38-year-old admitted to two counts of assault occasioning actual bodily harm and damaging property over video link yesterday from HMP Swaleside in Kent.

The assaults happened in February and June last year, resulting in Shepherd's recall to prison. Parole documents revealed that Shepherd had begun an "intimate relationship" with the woman in August 2024.

Shepherd was originally jailed for 10 years for manslaughter in 2018 over the death of 24-year-old Charlotte Brown when his speedboat crashed on the River Thames during a first date.

The incident happened in December 2015, and Shepherd was rescued from the Thames before going on the run in Georgia. He was convicted at the Old Bailey in absence, before he was eventually extradited to the UK to serve his sentence.



Jack Shepherd pleaded guilty to assault. He will remain in custody until his sentencing in September

According to a prosecution summary of the assault case, Shepherd admitted pinning down his girlfriend by "punching her several times causing bruising to her arm and top of leg".

In the second incident, Shepherd became angry with his partner for burning a pizza during a barbecue and "proceeded to hit her with the barbecue tongs on her left breast which caused a permanent scar".

Shepherd was set free on licence in January 2024 after serving six-and-a-half years of his sentence, but faced recall to prison in September last year after he was accused of violence towards a woman.

At court yesterday, Shepherd pleaded guilty to three offences as prosecutors agreed to drop two other allegations of controlling or coercive behaviour and intentional suffocation.

Judge Martin Edmunds KC, the Recorder of Kensington and Chelsea, remanded Shepherd into custody until a sentencing hearing in September.

The judge ordered a probation report on Shepherd's progress when he was freed from prison in 2024 and the first half of 2025. Shepherd told the court that his latest release date from prison, at the end of the manslaughter sentence, was January 2029.

Funeral home victim: I spoke to the wrong ashes for months

By **Martin Evans** CRIME EDITOR

A GRIEVING widow has described how she spoke to her husband's ashes every day, only to discover they did not belong to him.

Valerie Coates told Hull Crown Court how Robert Bush, a funeral director, had robbed her of the opportunity to be laid to rest with her husband Ron after mixing up his ashes.

Bush, 48, has admitted 67 offences, including preventing a lawful and decent burial, fraudulent trading, fraud by false representation and theft from well-known charities.

This followed the discovery of 35 bodies and more than 100 sets of ashes at the premises of his firm, Legacy Independent Funeral Directors in Hull, in March 2024.

The court heard how he kept 31 bodies, including an unborn baby in a paper bag, at his funeral home while falsely telling their families they had been cremated and giving them the ashes of a stranger.

On the second day of his sentencing hearing, families described the devastating impact his crimes had had on them and their memories of their loved ones.

Mrs Coates said her family had held a celebration of her husband's life, but it had been turned into a "sick joke" and a "horror story" when they realised there were not his remains.

She said she had to subsequently deal with the "cruel realisation that the beautiful urn I cherished, and talked to every day, did not contain his ashes after all".

Mrs Coates added: "We had made a pact, Ron and I, a promise to each other, that our ashes would eventually be together. Robert Bush has made that impossible, and I shall never know what actually happened to Ron's ashes."

> 'Dad was such a lovely man and Rob Bush treated him like a piece of meat. I feel anger, hatred and distrust'

Another grieving relative described how Bush made entirely inappropriate remarks when dealing with her father's remains.

Brooke Atkinson said her father Shane had died in October 2023, and Bush's manner had been very disturbing.

She said: "He made some strange comments like 'it's been a pleasure working with your dad this week. I've had a lot of fatties in this week, it's been hard work, and your dad is little."

Angela Scottow accused Bush of treating her late father's remains "like a piece of meat".

In a statement, she said: "Dad was such a lovely man, and Rob Bush treated him like a piece of meat. I feel only anger, hatred and disgust for the man that I trusted to treat my dad with dignity and respect. He has absolutely broken me. How will I trust anyone again?"

The court also heard how when police recovered the body of 88-year-old Peter Brown, who had died more than a month earlier, they discovered he was still wearing his hearing aids.

Tina Thames described how the thought of her father's body being stored at the funeral home for weeks had left her devastated.

"I had nightmares and thoughts of bodies just piled up came into my mind. The only way I can describe it is like seeing images of the bodies found in Auschwitz during the war," she said.

Stacey Foster and her partner Peter Cooke, whose son Tommy passed away in the womb, described how they had had jewellery made containing his ashes only to discover they belonged to someone else.

The sentencing hearing continues.

Double murderer 'Dexter' fan strangled cellmate for snoring

By **Telegraph Reporter**

A FAN of TV serial killer *Dexter* killed his cellmate while awaiting trial for the double murder of two homeless men.

Yesterday James Desborough, 40, was found guilty of the murders of Claudio Aquilino, 57, and 43-year-old Daniel Coleman and the dismemberment and hiding of their bodies in a Cornish woodland last year.

It can now be reported that he strangled Steven Kempster, his cellmate at HMP Exeter, while on remand awaiting trial, as he was irritated by his snoring.

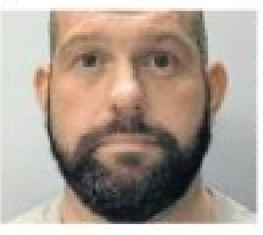
Desborough had gone on trial at Exeter Crown Court in March accused of murdering the 65-year-old, who was in poor health. He was found guilty, and in June was jailed for life by a judge and told to serve a minimum of 19 years.

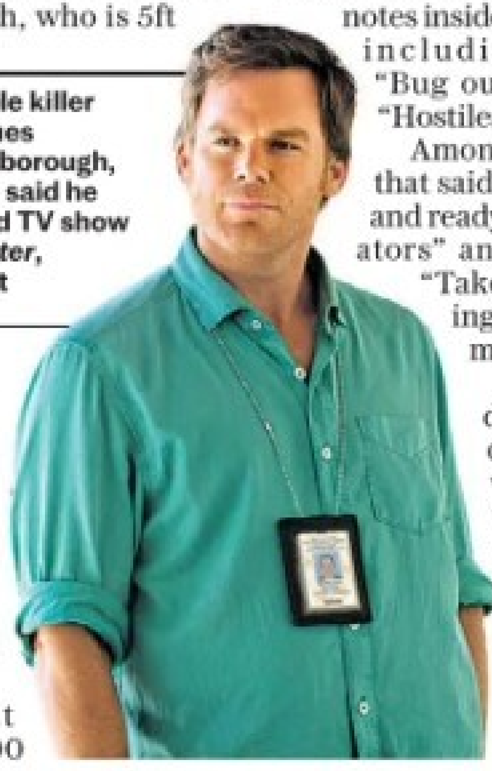
Reporting restrictions prevented details of the case being published until the conclusion of his trial for the murder of the homeless men.

Ahmed Hossain KC, prosecuting, said Desborough had killed Kempster three days after they started sharing a cell: "James Desborough was displeased at having to share a cell with Steven Kempster and told others on the wing about this. He cited Steven Kempster snoring and returning his cutlery unwashed as sources of irritation."

Yesterday, a jury at Winchester Crown Court returned the unanimous guilty verdicts after deliberating for three hours and 15 minutes. Desborough showed no emotion as the verdicts were read out.

The court heard that Aquilino and Coleman had previously lived with Desborough at a homeless hostel and the last time they were both seen alive was in his company. After their disappearances, Desborough, who is 5ft 10in and weighs nearly 18st, went on to spend their money on drugs and alcohol.





Triple killer James Desborough, left, said he liked TV show *Dexter*, right

Their bodies were dismembered in an area of Sticker Woods, near St Austell, where Desborough lived in a wooden cabin.

It was there that police discovered 1,900 burned bone fragments from the body of Aquilino deposited in a stream.

Parts of Coleman's body, including his torso, legs and feet, were found in a shallow grave nearby.

Desborough told a forensic biologist who was searching the woods for Coleman's body that he "particularly enjoyed the dismemberment scenes" in the *Dexter* television series.

Police found several handwritten notes inside Desborough's cabin, including one headed: "Bug out list" and another: "Hostiles".

Among the notes were one that said "I know I am a killer and ready to execute any predators" and another that said "Take care of the remaining muppets", with Coleman's name also listed.

Desborough also drew a series of concentric circles with Sticker Woods in the centre, and London and Benidorm listed at the outer point, which was entitled "Kill Zone" and had the sub-heading "Operational spheres".

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Flour power: bread is actually good for you

Nutritional quality matters more for long-term health than whether foods are ultra-processed, study says

By **Sarah Knapton** SCIENCE EDITOR

BREAKFAST cereals and bread have been given a reprieve by nutritionists, who have admitted that some ultra-processed foods are not that bad for health after all.

Harvard University has found that the nutritional quality of food is far more important than the processing level when it comes to long-term health.

British experts said the results provided an important balance to the current "scaremongering" about ultra-processed foods (UPFs).

The study of more than 200,000 people showed that quality of diet was important to lower the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and death, regardless of the level of food processing.

While many ultra-processed foods are high in sugars, salt and refined carbohydrates, others, such as fortified breakfast cereals, whole-grain bread and canned beans contain important nutrients, fibre and antioxidants, the authors argued.

Conversely, many unprocessed foods, such as homemade cakes, fruit juice, potatoes, red meat and white rice can be unhealthy.

Researchers said it was still important to limit processed foods with low nutritional value such as hamburgers, chips, pizza, doughnuts, fizzy drinks and biscuits.

Dr Xiaowen Wang, of the department of nutrition at Harvard's TH Chan School of Public Health, said: "While many ultra-processed foods tend to be of poor nutritional quality and should generally be limited or avoided, processing itself is not inherently harmful.

"Focus on what you're eating overall, not just whether it's processed. A healthy plant-based diet rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes and healthy plant oils is beneficial, even if it includes some processed foods."

In Britain, the average person consumes 56 per cent of their daily calories through UPFs, and previous research has shown they can have a detrimental effect on almost every organ of the body. Many UPFs are created from pre-digested ingredients, so the gut does not get the normal signals telling it not to overeat, leading to overconsumption. A study is ongoing to see whether UPFs could be behind the rise of bowel cancers among under-50s.

Recently, however, scientists have started to believe that the truth about ultra-processed food may be more nuanced.

For the new study, scientists examined the diets of people involved in three studies across three decades.

> 'Advising people to blanketly avoid processed foods is not a helpful approach'

Their diets were classed into one of four categories: healthy/ultra-processed, healthy/minimally processed, unhealthy/ultra-processed and unhealthy/minimally processed.

About half of the study participants had died or developed heart disease or type 2 diabetes in the intervening years, and healthy diets were associated with a lower risk, while unhealthy diets were associated with higher risk.

However, the risks were almost identical regardless of whether the diet was ultra-processed or minimally processed.

"Advising people to universally avoid ultra-processed foods can lead to lower diet quality since healthy ultra-processed foods are beneficial and unhealthy minimally-processed foods are detrimental," added Dr Wang.

Commenting on the research, Dr Beverley O'Hara, lecturer in public health nutrition at Leeds Beckett University, said: "The study appears to be an important counterbalance to the large number of poor-quality studies that have led to widespread scaremongering about UPFs.

"The results also showed that both processed and unprocessed healthy plant-based diets were protective against cardiovascular disease. These are important findings because they may help people to feel less anxious about eating the processed foods that are affordable, perfectly healthy and part of everyday life."

Dr Aisling Daly, senior lecturer in nutrition at Oxford Brookes University, added: "Advising people to blanketly avoid processed foods is not a helpful approach, so having a way to help consumers balance both processing level and nutrient quality would be a beneficial public health strategy, which would likely improve health outcomes.

"We have placed too much emphasis on processing level, without recognising that some processing is beneficial to our health, and other processing is not directly harmful to our health."

The research was presented at Nutrition 2026, the annual meeting of the American Society for Nutrition.

LORNE CAMPBELL / GUZELIAN

Sun in your eyes Sophie Ibbotson plays in a field of sunflowers at her family's farm in Barlow, Derbyshire, where members of the public can pick their own blooms from the seven-acre patch. The sunflowers are out in bloom for about six weeks, until the end of August.

NHS in talks to roll out first Alzheimer's drug to slow the disease

By **Laura Donnelly** HEALTH EDITOR

THE NHS has entered negotiations to roll out the first drugs shown to slow Alzheimer's disease.

Health officials and manufacturers have begun talks aimed at reaching a price that could allow the breakthrough treatment to be offered on the NHS.

Britain became the first country in Europe to license lecanemab in August 2024, after trials found it was the first drug to curb the progression of the disease. Research found it slowed cognitive decline by 27 per cent in people with early Alzheimer's disease.

But hopes of an NHS rollout were immediately dashed when the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice) concluded that the treatments were not good value for money.

Manufacturers have appealed the decision repeatedly, accusing health officials of exaggerating the cost of administering drugs, in a way which priced them out of reach of the NHS.

The appeal also heard concerns the appraisal had significantly underestimated the impact of disease progression on families caring for those with dementia. It is understood that Nice's committee has now revised these assumptions, reducing estimated costs of rollout, on top of the prices of the drug itself, and increasing the amount of burden on carers.

Since the drugs were rejected two years ago, Nice has also increased its thresholds to fund drugs, increasing the margin for negotiation.

Commercial discussions are intended to establish whether a lower price could make the treatment cost effective under Nice's rules.

If an agreement is reached, the rationing body will decide whether the revised deal justifies NHS funding.

Earlier this month, Nice invited NHS England and companies Eisai – which makes lecanemab – and Lilly, maker of donanemab – to begin commercial talks.

Eisai, which makes infusions that must be administered fortnightly, has now agreed to enter talks with NHS England. Any agreement reached would still need to satisfy Nice that the treatments represent value for money before routine NHS use could begin.

The company recently secured US approval for a self-administered version of lecanemab, allowing patients to inject the medicine at home each week rather than attend fortnightly hospital infusions. UK regulators are expected to decide later this year whether to approve that version, which could significantly reduce NHS delivery costs.

Earlier this month, *The Telegraph* revealed that the original appraisal by Nice assumed that caring for someone with severe dementia rather than mild cognitive impairment reduced carers' quality of life by only about four per cent. Charities, clinicians and manufacturers argued that this severely underestimated the effect.

A spokesman for Nice said: "The company has accepted the independent appraisal committee's assumptions as the basis of commercial discussions with NHS England. NHS England and the company will now explore all reasonable opportunities to secure a positive outcome for patients and the NHS."

Jurassic pork? Dinosaurs roasted to death by asteroid

By **Sarah Knapton** SCIENCE EDITOR

DINOSAURS roasted to death in a hellish "oven" created by superheated dust when an asteroid hit Earth 66m years ago, scientists believe.

When the Everest-sized space rock hit the planet at 45,000mph, it vaporised anything in its path and ignited landscapes within a 900-mile radius.

But planetary scientists at Purdue University, in the US, believe some dinosaurs may have survived had it not been for a cloud of ejected dust that sat like a lid over the Earth and prevented blast heat escaping into space.

Dr Alexandria Johnson, an expert in atmospheric sciences, said: "Anything that couldn't shelter itself somehow – underground or underwater – would have got baked or fried."

The Chicxulub asteroid sent more than 240 cubic miles of material into the atmosphere, some of which condensed into droplets of rock – spherules – which fell back to Earth, heating the air further.

Prof Brandon Johnson, of the department of Earth, atmospheric and planetary sciences at Purdue, said: "With the dust cloud trapping thermal radiation, it was like the surface and everything on it was being charbroiled – and that's what killed the dinosaurs and all the other animals. It's not the blast wave from the impact or the fireball – those don't go very far.

"It's the global ejection of this vapour plume material that makes this a global extinction event.

"Without the dust cloud, it would have been bad. It would have killed a lot of creatures, but it wouldn't have been a planetary catastrophe."

The Chicxulub impact near the Yucatán Peninsula is believed to have killed about three-quarters of all living species, including most of the dinosaurs. Only avian dinosaurs survived.

Previously, experts believed the asteroid triggered giant tsunamis and created a cloud that blocked the sun for years, causing plummeting temperatures and killing plants that starved dinosaurs that ate vegetation.

When the plant-eaters died, the meat-eaters also died. But the new study suggests that, for most animals, the apocalypse probably occurred much more quickly.

Researchers calculated that the heat trapped by the fine dust meant the dinosaurs received a dose of thermal radiation 17 times more than the amount that would be lethal to humans.

The study was published in the *Journal of Geophysical Research: Biogeosciences.*

SIMON JACOBS/PINPEP

Get the doodle bug Artist Mr Doodle takes over London's West End with a free art trail featuring five giant sculptures.

Proof that Romans liked a bet as die found at Hadrian's Wall

By **Telegraph Reporter**

A BONE die which Roman soldiers would have used to gamble with 2,000 years ago has been discovered near Hadrian's Wall.

The rare find was dug up at Magna Roman Fort, in Northumberland, and is the first die of its kind to be uncovered at the site.

Experts say the 1cm-wide cube offers an insight into how Roman soldiers and residents of the fort spent their leisure time while guarding the outpost of empire.

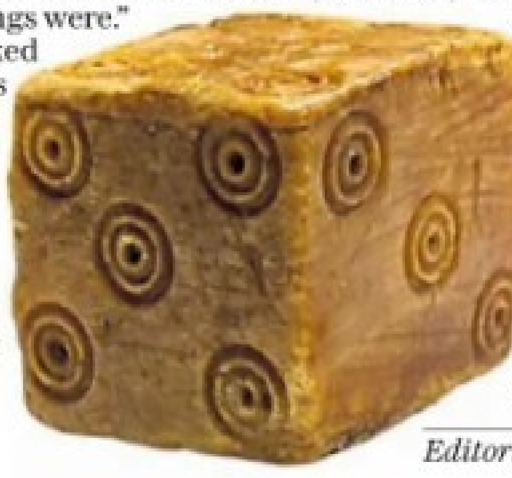
Sue Mingay, the excavator who made the discovery on July 22, said: "When I saw it, and the shape of it, I hoped it would be a die. When I looked more closely, I was over the moon to see how delicate the markings were."

The finely worked piece of bone was found beside what were the furnaces of the praetorium bathhouse which formed part of the commander's quarters. Sonya Galloway, of the heritage charity The Vindolanda Trust, said the find created an instant link to those who once lived at the fort.

She added: "Holding something so familiar, yet so ancient, really brings that human story of Magna to life. It's easy to see why this bone die has captured so many people's imaginations… almost everyone will have rolled a die while playing a game, so there's an immediate connection to the people who lived at Magna nearly 2,000 years ago. Now we need to find the game board."

The discovery emerged during the Magna Excavations, a five-year project backed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Archaeologists have previously uncovered fourth-century paving stones, the remains of a Hadrianic form of underfloor heating as well as a Roman belt buckle and spearhead.

Other recent finds include bone gaming counters and a worked antler with evidence of having had a die cut from it.



The die is made from animal bone

Editorial Comment: Page 15

Oh, we don't like to be beside the seaside? Beach hut prices sink

By **Joe Wright** SENIOR MONEY WRITER

BEACH hut prices have plummeted 30 per cent in two years as Britain's obsession with the colourful seaside cabins fades.

Asking prices for coastal cabins skyrocketed in the post-pandemic staycation boom, hitting an average price of £45,800 in summer 2024, according to analysis by estate agency Yopa. However, just two years later, the average cost has slipped to £33,300.

West Sussex recorded the biggest regional price drop, falling 35 per cent in the last year alone, followed by Norfolk (-13 per cent) and Essex (-12 per cent).

There are an estimated 28,000 beach huts across Britain, ranging from shacks with no running water or electricity to fully equipped structures that act as seasonal seaside retreats. The vast majority are not suitable for living in, but there are some exceptions. Verona Frankish, the chief executive of Yopa, said it was inevitable that demand for beach huts would fade.

"The beach hut market experienced the same surge in demand that we saw across the wider housing market in the wake of the pandemic," she said. "Buyers placed far greater value on lifestyle purchases and making the most of the UK's coastline. But while demand for beach huts remains strong, they're ultimately a discretionary purchase. With confidence across the wider property market remaining subdued, it's no surprise that we've seen values ease over the last couple of years."

Paul Denley, of Oakham Wealth Management, said: "Beach huts were the poster child of pandemic-era exuberance. Inevitably that froth was never going to last."

He warned that prices could soften further but that the supply of beach huts was "inherently limited" and urged owners against rushing to sell.

"For anyone who bought at the peak, the temptation to crystallise a loss may be understandable, but panic selling into weakness rarely ends well. What we're seeing now is a classic correction rather than a collapse." Cathy Biggs, of Hove's Beach Hut Association, said demand has significantly cooled. "Things have definitely slowed down. They were previously going for around £40,000 but now you'd struggle to get £30,000."

Huts along the Dorset coastline bucked the national trend, with asking prices showing a slight increase over the past year, according to Yopa's analysis.

Spelling tests too 'obscure' for pupils, says minister

Lucy Powell claims that words such as 'affordable', 'scene' and 'through' are too hard for ten-year-olds

By **Dominic Penna**
SENIOR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE spelling test for primary school leavers is too "obscure", the new Education Secretary has claimed.

Lucy Powell suggested that she would consider changing the spelling, punctuation and grammar (Spag) exams currently taken by Year Six pupils.

The Spag tests were introduced by the coalition government in 2013 and are still compulsory for all Year Six pupils at English state schools.

Last week, *The Telegraph* unearthed remarks from 2019 in which Ms Powell opposed "draconian" spelling tests for primary school pupils, saying they should focus on "creativity". Asked whether she stood by her comments, Ms Powell told BBC Radio 5 Live: "Look, spelling's obviously important, good grammar, I'm sure you want to talk to me about that as well, and spelling.

"What I've talked about in the past are some aspects of the SATs, and the spelling and grammar test in that. It's particularly obscure in parts, isn't it?"

She added: "I think what we always have to remember with these things, it's about learning how to communicate in written, in oral and other forms, and not get too drawn into some, you know, kind of specific aspects of grammar."

The Education Secretary was reminded of her claim that primary school spelling tests had gone too far, and was asked whether she still held that view.

She responded: "We've had this curriculum and assessment review… We're having a look at a number of recommendations that have been made in there."

Challenged on whether that could mean fewer spelling tests, Ms Powell said: "I think I was talking about one specific assessment which is called the Spag test at the end of Key Stage 2.

"Have you looked at that test recently? Have a look at it, see if you pass it."

Ms Powell said that the purpose of primary-school English qualifications must be ensuring that children could "read, write and communicate". She went on to argue that assessments had to fit that model, and not the other way round.

The Spag tests are split into two parts, a 45-minute grammar and punctuation test, which includes about 50 questions, and a 20-word spelling test read aloud by an exam invigilator.

During her time as a Labour backbencher in 2019, Ms Powell – one of Andy Burnham's closest allies – criticised the "ridiculous" assessments and said they were being used to "micro-manage" children.

She went on to suggest that secondary school pupils in England should not have to do the same "handful of GCSEs" – currently English language, maths and science. Yesterday, Ms Powell hinted that students could soon take fewer GCSE exams in line with a review of the national curriculum sitting on her desk. She said: "My daughter's awaiting her own GCSE results. My daughter did 25 exams in five weeks and it's a lot, isn't it? It's a lot of pressure."

Asked whether the current number of exams was too high, Ms Powell replied: "Well, the Government's just had this sort of curriculum and assessment review, which is kind of sitting on my desk at the moment, looking at some of these issues.

"We're going to look at that and take forward some changes to the curriculum and assessment system so that it is fit for that world of work, and there are some things we can look at within that."

Ms Powell served as leader of the Commons under Sir Keir Starmer but was sacked in September 2025 as the then prime minister reshuffled his top team. Two months later, however, she was back at Sir Keir's side as Labour's deputy leader after being elected by the party faithful following Angela Rayner's resignation.

To the letter Words that 11-year-olds are asked to spell

- ●Knight
- ●Through
- ●Rewarded
- ●Adventure
- ●Developed
- ●Explosion
- ●Passed
- ●Scene
- ●Affordable
- ●Suggestion
- ●Angrily
- ●Alteration
- ●Reindeer
- ●Residential
- ●Anchor
- ●Plaque
- ●Jealousy
- ●Flourish
- ●Disappointed
- ●Receiving

TREVOR SUTCLIFFE/SWNS

Easy tiger Wildlife photographer Paul Goldstein marked International Tiger Day as he walked with Michaela Strachan yesterday on the first half of a 1,000-mile charity trek.

HMRC claws back £100m from small landlords

By **Charlotte Gifford**
SENIOR MONEY REPORTER

HMRC recovered more than £100m in tax from landlords last year following a data-driven crackdown, figures show.

Thousands of landlords came forward in 2025-26 to report undeclared rental income after receiving "nudge letters" from the tax office.

Landlords made 11,511 voluntary disclosures, the highest number since 2018-19, with average payments of £9,063. HMRC recovered £104.3m in 2025-26, nearly three times the £36.8m it received in 2019-20. It was the third year in a row that receipts exceeded £100m.

The number of landlords making disclosures to HMRC has surged as a result of the tax office's Let Property Campaign, which allows those who have underpaid tax on their rental income to come forward and potentially benefit from lower penalties.

Price Bailey, the accountancy firm that obtained the data, said HMRC was increasingly using Land Registry data to identify people who own multiple residential properties and may have undeclared rental income. They are then sent "nudge letters" telling them to double-check their affairs.

£674m

Amount of money the Let Property Campaign has recovered since it was launched by HMRC in 2013-14

Andrew Park, a partner at Price Bailey, said: "HMRC's data-matching capability has become relentless. Most voluntary disclosures are now prompted by HMRC nudge letters.

"HMRC is casting the net wider and catching landlords who may only have modest rental income but still have undeclared tax liabilities."

Mr Park added that many of those caught out were accidental landlords who kept a property after moving in with a partner, inherited a property, or temporarily moved abroad. "They are often genuinely unaware that they have taxable profits to disclose," he said.

Some landlords were also caught out by the "phantom profit" effect, according to Mr Park. Landlords used to be able to deduct mortgage interest from their rental income, but this relief was phased out between 2017 and 2020. Instead, landlords get a 20 per cent tax credit. Confusion around the change has led to unexpected tax bills.

Other mistakes include claiming expenses that are not allowable. For example, landlords can deduct the cost of repairs from their rental income but not the cost of property improvements.

The Let Property Campaign has brought in £674m since it was launched in 2013-14.

Standing joke: London commuters have less chance of a train seat

By **Gareth Corfield**
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THE odds of getting a seat on a London commuter train have hit an all-time low, according to new government data.

More than one in four London rail commuters are now being forced to stand on packed morning trains.

About 27 per cent of the 1.3 million people travelling into the capital by train every weekday morning cannot get a seat, according to newly released figures from the Department for Transport.

This is the highest proportion of standing passengers ever, in records going back to 2011.

The Lib Dems condemned the "embarrassingly poor service". However, the Government pointed to record passenger numbers combined with an increase in the number of seats available.

The statistics also revealed the single most overcrowded train in England and Wales is the 8.09 Thameslink departure from London St Pancras, which is more than 75 per cent over its theoretical maximum passenger capacity.

The second-most overcrowded passenger train was West Midlands Trains' 17.46 departure from London Euston to Crewe, while the third-most overcrowded was a Transport for Wales service from Bridgend to Rhymney, near Caerphilly in south Wales.

Four of the top 10 most overcrowded trains were operated by South Western Railway, which announced it is cutting services on its West of England line because of a "soil moisture deficit" that risks tracks shifting due to dry ground.

Olly Glover, the Lib Dem transport spokesman, said: "UK rail travel should be easy and affordable, yet we are still lumped with an embarrassingly poor service across our rail network, with passengers paying extortionate prices and not even getting a seat on peak trains."

A Department for Transport spokesman said that the number of seats available had grown by 4 per cent over the last year, adding that overcrowding had generally declined since autumn 2024.

He added: "The vast majority of passengers – 98.9 per cent – typically travel on services that are not overcrowded.

"Where there are pinch points during peak hours, work is under way to improve capacity. GTR has added carriages to its busiest commuter services, while South Western Railway has boosted capacity by nearly 30 per cent."

Cambridge's diversity poster boy 'must face plagiarism inquiry' over PhD thesis

By **Gordon Rayner** ASSOCIATE EDITOR

THE University of Cambridge is facing calls to commission an independent inquiry into plagiarism claims surrounding one of its most high-profile professors.

The university has so far refused to re-examine the academic credentials of Prof Jason Arday, who has been accused of copying parts of his PhD thesis from another student.

But pressure is growing on the university after the publication of a fresh analysis of his work, which found 188 sentences that were identical or highly similar to the work of Paula Zwozdiak-Myers, a Brunel University student. Statistically, the chances of Prof Arday using the same words by chance were put at one in 100 billion.

An earlier analysis of Prof Arday's PhD thesis for *The Telegraph* had identified more than 100 passages that were identical or nearly identical to Ms Zwozdiak-Myers's work. Cambridge has claimed its professor of sociology of education is the victim of a "vile campaign to undermine his credibility", but respected academics at other universities say Cambridge must allow external scrutiny to protect its own academic integrity.

Ian Pace, a professor of music, culture and society at City St George's, University of London, said: "There needs to be an independent inquiry into this now. Universities are to some extent public institutions and benefit from public money and as such they need to be publicly accountable, not to mention maintaining scholarly standards.

"It's possible that the Office for Students [the higher education regulator] might be able to oversee it."

Dr David Harris, Professor Emeritus at Plymouth Marjon University, said: "I think that would be a great idea, as long as you could find someone to do it. It might need to be someone from abroad."

> 'There needs to be a public inquiry into this now. Universities need to be publicly accountable'

Dr Harris is one of several academics to have analysed Prof Arday's 2015 PhD thesis and to have found considerable "textual overlap" with a 2009 thesis by Ms Zwozdiak-Myers. He said last week that Prof Arday's thesis and other published work "seem to display indications of serious plagiarism".

Prof Arday's doctorate was granted by Liverpool John Moores University, which has also insisted he has done nothing wrong.

Robert Dingwall, Professor Emeritus of the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University, said: "There should be an independent investigation focusing on the prima facie evidence of plagiarism if neither university is prepared to take it up. In my opinion this is probably a matter for the Office for Students."

The Office for Students was contacted for comment.

Prof Jason Arday has been accused of copying parts of his PhD

> 'There should be an independent investigation if neither university is prepared to take it up'

Netanyahu: I'm not manipulating Trump

Israeli leader reacts to president's frustration around being boxed in to all-out conflict with Iran

By **Daniel Bates** *and* **Connor Stringer**

MAYAN TOAF/GETTY IMAGES

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU'S office has insisted the Israeli leader is not manipulating Donald Trump to keep the United States in the war with Iran.

Donald Trump expressed frustration with the Israeli prime minister just hours before their Oval Office meeting yesterday, suggesting Mr Netanyahu was trying to box him in and return to all-out conflict.

At first, the two leaders seemed perfectly aligned in their objectives to rid Iran of a nuclear weapon. But their relationship has soured in recent months over Mr Netanyahu's quest to continue the all-out war, which Mr Trump seems desperate to avoid.

Tzipi Hotovely, the Israeli prime minister's director of communications, said there was "no truth in the claim" that Israel is pushing the US to resume fighting.

"There is no truth in the claim that Israel is pushing the US in a certain direction on the Iran issue," Ms Hotovely told reporters.

"The prime minister is not telling the US president what to do and is not pushing him in any direction. Both sides want to prevent Iran from having nuclear weapons. There are many ways to achieve this goal."

Mr Trump and Mr Netanyahu also discussed the possibility of Saudi Arabia normalising relations with Israel, which the US president demanded as part of a Saudi nuclear deal.

Mr Netanyahu said his meeting with Mr Trump was "excellent" and among one of the best sit-downs the two leaders have ever had.

"It was a meeting with full co-operation," he said in a video posted online, "with mutual support, with understanding on the joint goal that Iran won't have nuclear weapons, and also other goals. It was one of the best conversations I've had with our friend, US president Trump."

Speaking to Fox News earlier yesterday, the US president vented his frustration about reports that Mr Netanyahu planned to discuss intelligence related to Pickaxe Mountain, the heavily fortified underground nuclear site.

"I don't need Bibi to tell me that," Mr Trump said, using Mr Netanyahu's nickname. "Bibi is telling me that because he wants me to stay involved. I heard Bibi announce that, I said why don't you just tell it to me? Why do you have to announce it to the world?"

Yesterday's meeting began with little fanfare, with Mr Netanyahu entering the White House via a side entrance to the West Wing. His office later released photos showing JD Vance, who is sceptical of the war, flanking Mr Trump as the pair discussed the conflict.

Mr Trump has reached an inflection point where he is deciding between ending the current campaign to pursue diplomacy with a reluctant enemy, or returning to full-blown war while battling a missile shortage.

The war is deeply unpopular with US voters, who will return to the polls in 98 days for the midterms. Critics believe that the war was thrust upon Mr Trump by his Israeli ally.

Mr Netanyahu reportedly discussed with Mr Trump fresh intelligence on how Iran is rebuilding its military and nuclear programme. According to reports, he presented the US with inside information showing a significant and concrete reconstruction process in Iran.

However the "bad blood and frustration" between the two men has grown so bad that they are "suspicious of each other's intentions" and mistrusting of

Donald Trump had a busy schedule of meetings yesterday, with Benjamin Netanyahu, above and Volodymyr Zelensky, left

supposed intelligence, sources close to the president told Axios. It has led some senior officials to come to "view Netanyahu with disdain, arguing he was consistently wrong about the war".

Members of the press were not permitted into the meeting, which took place behind closed doors in the Oval Office. Afterwards, Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary, described it as "productive and positive".

Also visiting the White House for some face time with Mr Trump was Volodymyr Zelensky, who is enjoying a fresh wave of support from the US despite a highly publicised falling-out in February 2025. Like Mr Netanyahu, he made the visit to Washington to attend the funeral of Lindsey Graham, a former senator.

Mr Zelensky arrived at the Oval Office hoping to convince his US counterpart to help him finally bring an end to almost five years of war with Russia.

Ukraine has been inflicting severe pain on Russia in recent weeks, with Moscow's mayor saying that 390 drones hit the city on Monday night. Washington now believes Vladimir Putin is on the back foot for the first time.

Another factor helping Mr Zelensky is Laura Loomer, a Maga influencer who has the ear of Mr Trump. Ms Loomer abruptly changed her stance on Ukraine after visiting the country on Thursday.

She is now considering running for the US Senate, possibly in Graham's seat after his sudden death on July 11.

Sources described Mr Trump and Mr Zelensky's meeting yesterday as wholly positive. One person in the room told *The Telegraph* that Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, the president's peace envoys, agreed to visit Kyiv.

Iranian protesters clash with executioners over public hangings

By **Akhtar Makoii**

IRANIAN demonstrators clashed with security forces in an attempt to stop the execution of two men arrested during the unrest in the country in January.

It is the first significant public protest since that upheaval and the war that killed Ali Khamenei, the former supreme leader. Videos shared on social media showed a crane erected in Isfahan's Alikhani Square, where the executions were carried out in public.

Crowds gathered through the night to try to prevent them. Gunshots could be heard in some footage. Other clips showed riot police from the Islamic Republic's special units, deployed with motorcycles and armoured vehicles, moving to disperse the crowd. Demonstrators fled as officers pursued them.

The gatherings began on Monday night after images of the gallows circulated online and families of those condemned assembled at the square.

Witnesses said security forces fired paintball rounds and tear gas at the crowd and that snipers were positioned in the area. Some footage showed green laser dots trained on demonstrators.

In one video, a bystander shouts "don't hit him" as officers use a stun gun on a protester. In others, the crowd chants "shameless, shameless" at the security forces. Internet access in Isfahan was also disrupted.

Despite the protests, the two men, Abolfazl Sepahi and Amirhossein Safari, were hanged, the judiciary-linked Mizan news agency reported.

The case stems from the events of Jan 8, when, according to Iran's judiciary, four security personnel were killed in Isfahan's Malekshahr district. The judiciary said the staff were attacked with rocks, stripped, tied to a sign and burned alive, in what it called a rare and horrific crime.

State-aligned outlets published a brief video captured at a distance they said showed the officers' bodies burning, though the footage was unclear and the figures in it could not be identified.

The judiciary named the four dead officers and framed the defendants as armed rioters who destroyed public property, attacked a police station with Molotov cocktails and set officers alight.

Sepahi, 23, and Safari, 28, both from Isfahan, were among at least 14 people given final death sentences in the case, out of roughly 60 detained in a mass arrest. Another 23 received prison terms of five to 10 years. Two other defendants were executed in Isfahan earlier this month.

Ukrainians would rather live in shadows than die on front line

Antonia Langford
in Kyiv

Roman leaves his apartment in Kyiv only under cover of darkness. For more than three years, he has scarcely ventured beyond his front door. He orders meals to his home using Glovo, a delivery app, and when he speaks with his elderly parents, it is by phone.

If he does sneak out during the city's midnight to 5am curfew, he tries to avoid being seen by neighbours and stay away from main roads, hoping blackouts shield him during his furtive strolls to a park.

Roman, 44, whose name we have changed at his request, told *The Telegraph* his isolated existence as a draft dodger was "hell on earth".

Yet, he believes one fate would be worse: being caught by one of Ukraine's draft patrols, whose aggressive street round-ups of military-age men have led to increasingly violent confrontations.

Fury boiled over in the western city of Lviv earlier this month, when an attempt to detain three men suspected of evading the draft led to a riot involving an estimated 200 people.

Passers-by, mostly young men, were filmed climbing on top of a draft officer's car, then overturning it. They stripped officers of their uniforms and chanted: "Shame!"

Volodymyr Zelensky and Gen Kyrylo Budanov, one of Ukraine's most respected military leaders, condemned the rioters' actions. He said: "If today you tear the clothes off and beat a serviceman from your own army, consider who will defend you tomorrow from the enemy."

Videos of such altercations between military-age men and Ukraine's reviled territorial recruitment centres have become a fixture of social media. Their tactics have become known as "busification", after the minibuses used to take away recruits who have been forcibly conscripted.

For Roman and other men living in hiding, they are a spectre of absolute fear. He said: "Think for a second about what my life looks like. I don't have a job. I can't go abroad. I can't see my friends."

Still, he insists, his restricted existence does not compare to the horrors of serving on the front line: "I simply don't want to die. It's the most basic human instinct."

It is a sentiment shared by an estimated two million draft dodgers across Ukraine, as well as hundreds of thousands of soldiers listed as "absent without leave" after fleeing the front line.

Heavy-handed tactics have become the norm during Ukraine's struggle to sustain its fighting force, making draft officers targets of public anger.

Three are known to have been killed and in April the national police said there had been 611 attacks since the start of the war. The number of violent incidents has climbed year on year, from five in 2022 to almost 120 in the first four months of this year.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's human rights commissioner collected more than 6,000 complaints from the public alleging violence by recruiters.

'I simply don't want to die. It's the most basic human instinct'

The escalation has coincided with an increasingly urgent manpower crisis on the front line, driven by exhaustion; a depleted pool of volunteers; perceptions of institutional corruption, and mounting bitterness over mobilisation practices.

An estimated 150,000 Ukrainian troops have been killed since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, with more than 500,000 believed to have been wounded.

The situation will become even more critical if, as recent reports have suggested, Russia manages to add hundreds of thousands of recruits to its forces with a new wave of mobilisation after State Duma elections in September.

Dr Jaroslava Barbieri, a research fellow at the Ukraine Forum at Chatham House, said: "After years of total war, it's unsurprising that we see demoralisation both in military circles and in the wider civilian population.

"If you look back to the beginning of the full-scale invasion, there was a wave of people voluntarily showing up – and, understandably, with every year the war continues, the number of people is becoming smaller and smaller."

Mykhailo Fedorov, Ukraine's ousted defence minister, came into office to address that.

The 35-year-old tech guru championed "asymmetrical" tactics, replacing high-casualty, attritional warfare with technology and automation to preserve Ukrainian lives and increase trust in military service.

During his tenure in the first six months of this year, the ratio of Russian to Ukrainian casualties rose to almost eight to one, according to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, up from two to one or three to one for much of the war.

This is attributed largely to the country's canny use of drones, including AI-enabled models.

Mr Fedorov's ousting by Mr Zelensky this month sent incensed protesters streaming onto the streets with handmade signs, in what was facetiously called a "cardboard Maidan" – an allusion to the country's 2014 Maidan Revolution.

The movement succeeded in securing the dismissal of Gen Oleksandr Syrsky, the armed forces' commander-in-chief, whom the former defence minister had accused of blocking military reforms, including to the country's highly unpopular mobilisation system.

The rift between the pair had been what Mr Zelensky said had forced him to remove Mr Fedorov from his job.

Ukrainian soldiers keep watch for Russian drones as they head to the front line near Kostyantinivka in Donetsk

Gen Syrsky has been replaced by Mykhailo Drapatyi, who had previously backed Mr Fedorov in calling for a sweeping overhaul of the military and command culture.

Mr Fedorov's fate is still unclear. He has reportedly refused offers of another role in government, saying he will accept reinstatement only as defence minister.

Amid the turmoil, questions remain over the status of the minister's army reforms, which aimed to make service more attractive and draw Ukrainians to the army without using force.

The stalled changes included the introduction of fixed-term contracts, higher salaries, frontline hazard pay, streamlined transfers between units and a longer amnesty window for soldiers listed as absent without leave, allowing them to return without punishment.

Dr Barbieri said: "Although these reforms were not perfect, they were symptomatic of an attempt to overhaul a system perceived as deeply unfair and corrupt.

"[Fedorov] was a breath of fresh air in that he injected a sense of justice that had been missing."

Whether or not he returns, Dr Barbieri said, Ukrainians felt it was important the reforms continued.

She said: "With time, these reforms could create new incentives to attract people to the army, because people know exactly where they're going, for how long, how much they're being paid, and what benefits they and their families will get after service. That would certainly change the current situation in a positive way."

However, Roman takes a different view. Asked whether army reforms would make him consider military service, he said: "No. Of course, I hope they make things easier for our guys at the front. But this war could go on for a very long time. I don't want to take any risks."

Biden kept classified information at his house

Ex-US president told his biographer he possessed sensitive White House files while recording memoir

By **Lily Shanagher**

JOE BIDEN openly discussed keeping classified government documents at his house, private recordings with his biographer have revealed.

In audio released by the Right-wing Oversight Project, the former president is heard sharing the material with Mark Lewis Zwontizer. The pair were working on Mr Biden's 2017 memoir, *Promise Me, Dad*.

"I just found all the classified stuff downstairs," Mr Biden, now 83, is heard saying at one point in the audio, recorded in February 2017, a month after he left the White House.

In an earlier interview, while still serving as Barack Obama's vice-president, he said: "The next thing I have here is... classified... they didn't even know I had this," referring to the White House.

In the conversations for his $8m book deal, he appeared at times forgetful and admitted being confused.

In one part of an interview Mr Biden says: "All right – what was I going to ask you? Something else... Uh... um. Oh gosh. I can't think of anything else."

In another moment, Mr Biden asks his ghostwriter to "Hang on a second", while he apparently studies his notes. "Um... it's confusing me," the former president later says.

Mr Biden had fought to keep the tapes private, suing the justice department in May, but dropped the lawsuit after an appeals court ruled they should be made public.

TJ Ducklo, Mr Biden's spokesman, said in a statement that releasing the tapes was "just the latest example of this administration weaponising the DoJ [department of justic] for political retribution".

Republicans have pointed out that it was under Mr Biden's administration that Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago home was raided and searched for classified documents.

Mr Trump was charged with illegally retaining documents, but the charges were dropped when he became president again.

Mr Biden's interviews also revealed heated disagreements between himself and Mr Obama over the response to the 2008 financial crisis, as well as deploying troops to Afghanistan.

House Republicans and the Oversight Project – a branch of the powerful conservative think tank Heritage Foundation – sued for the tapes, which were handed over for a 2024 justice department investigation into Mr Biden.

The DoJ kept the files classified during Mr Biden's stint as president from 2021 to 2025, but released the heavily redacted files after Mr Trump returned to the White House following years of unsuccessful lawsuits by Mr Biden's legal team to keep them private.

In 2024, Robert Hur, the special counsel, looked at the tapes while investigating Mr Biden's handling of classified material.

He found Mr Biden had trouble with his memory, with the conversations at times "painfully slow, with Mr Biden struggling to remember events and straining at times to read and relay his own notebook entries".

'I just found all the classified stuff downstairs... the White House didn't even know I had this'

Because of Mr Biden's elderly disposition, poor memory and co-operation, Mr Hur decided not to bring a case against him.

In the tapes, Mr Biden tells the ghostwriter about meetings he had with Mr Obama and top advisers over his decision to run for president.

Strategists discussed Democratic candidates Hillary Clinton as being divisive and Bernie Sanders as too angry, Mr Biden claimed.

The team also discussed Mr Biden's "gaffe issue" as "like a virus".

He also discusses his opposition to Mr Obama's choice to send troops into Afghanistan.

And recalls Mr Obama getting "really p---ed at me" over his stances on improving the economy after the 2008 housing crisis, claiming he was backing housing and the middle class.

ELLE UK / YULIA GORBACHENKO

Pride and Joy Anya Taylor-Joy tells this month's *Elle* about her new role as star and co-producer of *Lucky*, a heist drama series on Apple TV.

Mamdani hits celeb backers with new property tax

By **Daniel Bates**

SOME OF Zohran Mamdani's biggest celebrity backers have been named on a list of homeowners who may have to pay his controversial new "pied-à-terre tax".

Anna Wintour, former editor-in-chief of *Vogue*, is on the list of people whose second homes will face surcharges, which could cost them hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

Cynthia Nixon, the *Sex and the City* star, also features on the list released by the New York City department of finance. Taylor Swift's home in the Tribeca neighbourhood appears to have been included, along with a home owned by Darren Aronofsky, an Oscar-nominated director.

An Upper East Side residence that appears to be owned by Woody Allen is also among those which will have to pay the surcharge of between 4 and 6.5 per cent, on top of existing property taxes.

The tax will apply from this year to high-value homes that are not the owner's primary residence.

The New York City comptroller estimates it will bring in $500m (£375m) from 13,000 second homes worth at least $5m.

$500m

Mayor Zohran Mamdani's 'pied-à-terre tax' on second homes will boost New York City's finances

The policy has already prompted anger from Kenneth Griffin, a billionaire investor, after Mr Mamdani filmed a video announcing it outside his Manhattan pied-à-terre.

But now it seems Mr Mamdani's own backers are being caught up in the policy, including Ms Wintour, whose Manhattan home is on the list.

In April, Ms Wintour said that she was "full of admiration" for Mr Mamdani's wife, Rama Duwaji, amid a controversy over the New York City first lady's social media posts about the Oct 7 2023 terror attacks in Israel.

Ms Nixon, who ran for New York state governor in 2018, has called Mr Mamdani a "miracle of nature" and helped raise money for his mayoral campaign.

In an Instagram post from last November, Ms Nixon wrote: "I love this man so much!"

Other names who appear on the list include author and New Age guru Deepak Chopra and journalist Gay Talese.

Just 31,000 homes were supposed to be liable for the new tax, but 960,000 residences and individuals were on the list which was made public.

Two-headed gecko 'Simon and Garfunkel' beats survival odds

By **Our Foreign Staff**

The breeders say that both heads of the gecko are capable of eating without help

A RARE two-headed gecko has defied the odds to reach four weeks old – with both heads able to feed independently.

The tiny crested gecko, named Simon and Garfunkel, hatched unexpectedly at a husband-and-wife breeding business in Carbon County, north-eastern Pennsylvania.

A spokesman for the breeders, Rockstar Geckos, said nothing had appeared unusual about the egg before the two-headed youngster emerged on June 29.

The breeders initially warned that animals born with the condition tend not to survive for long.

But Simon and Garfunkel is now reportedly thriving, weighing 1.8g and beginning to co-ordinate its movements.

Rockstar Geckos told NeedToKnow: "They're doing great. They seem to be doing well, so we're very happy about that."

Sharing their four-week milestone online, the breeders wrote: "Here they are at 4 weeks old!

"I chose these photos specifically to show just how tiny they still are, only 1.8 grams.

"It's hard to grasp until you see them next to a fingernail. On the bright side, their co-ordination is improving, and they're starting to move a bit more as a team."

The breeders confirmed both heads are capable of eating without help.

Neither head currently appears dominant, and their positioning means they cannot reach or bite one another.

The condition is known as dicephaly, a rare developmental abnormality in which an animal has two heads. Its exact incidence among crested geckos is not known.

A peer-reviewed paper published in 2010 noted only four cases of dicephalism had then been documented across three families of lizards.

Simon and Garfunkel weighed just under 2g after hatching.

Rockstar Geckos said at the time: "We were definitely very surprised. Nothing seemed different about this egg at all."

Cannon brawl: Thieves steal 16th century gun to rile neighbours

By **Samaan Lateef**
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT *in Mumbai*

TWO men in India have been accused of stealing a 400-year-old cannon from a historic hill fort to intimidate their neighbours.

Police in Madhya Pradesh arrested Aman Kumar Meena and Timmu Ram Meena, after linking them to a pickup truck allegedly used to transport the 3.5-ton cannon from Narwar Fort.

The men, from Rajasthan, are accused of being involved in a long-running dispute with a neighbouring community over water.

Insp Vinay Yadav said the men told police that they stole the cannon amid heightened tensions over the release of water from the Panchana Dam in eastern Rajasthan, where the Meena and Gurjar communities have been embroiled in a two-decade battle.

He alleged the cannon was stolen by the men from the Meena community and was intended to intimidate members of the Gurjar community, who are reluctant to release water from the dam until they receive compensation and a promised irrigation project for local villages. Mr Yadav said the suspects discussed using the cannon against the Panchana Dam itself if water was not released despite recent negotiations.

Police tracked the vehicle through CCTV footage, phone call recordings of suspects and toll plaza cameras. The cannon, however, has not been found.

Mr Yadav believes it is hidden in the Gamwada-Meena area of Rajasthan's Karauli district, where search teams equipped with metal detectors and sniffer dogs have been trying to recover it. Police also seized the pickup truck and metal pipes allegedly used to move the cannon.

'Others involved in the heist will be arrested soon, and the stolen historic cannon will be recovered'

Other people involved in the heist "will be arrested soon, and the stolen historic cannon will be recovered", Mr Yadav said.

Police believe the men tried to steal the cannon on July 3, hiring about two dozen labourers, but had to abandon the mission after they failed to shift its enormous weight. They returned nearly two weeks later with a crane, an excavator, metal pipes and other heavy equipment, entered the Narwar Fort through an unguarded rocky approach and removed the cannon during the intervening night of July 15-16.

The theft went unnoticed until the next morning, when a watchman discovered that one of the fort's 14 cannons had disappeared and reported it to the local police.

Meena leaders say more than 35 villages in the dam's area depend on canals that have remained closed since 2006 and want them reopened immediately.

Gurjar communities living around the reservoir's flood zone argue that water should not be released until compensation is paid and alternative irrigation arrangements are completed.

The Rajasthan government recently brokered talks between representatives of both communities after intervention by the High Court before releasing water into the canal network.

Police believe uncertainty over whether the agreement would hold provided the backdrop to the alleged conspiracy.

The missing cannon is cast from ashtadhatu, a traditional alloy of eight metals used in historic Indian sculpture.

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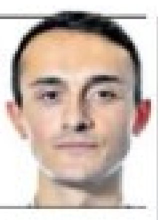
'It's like a war': Bakers and vintners join firefight



Cameron Henderson
in Cap Ferret

The Telegraph joins volunteers and servicemen helping to quell the worst blazes in French history

DRIVING THROUGH the forest of Cap Ferret, the once-idyllic holiday retreat for millionaires now feels ghoulish and barren.

Charred pine trunks and leafless saplings jut out of the ash-stained soil that lines the dirt road. Reams of smoke roll across the furrowed earth, stirring up glowing embers that quickly crackle to life, bursting into flame.

Fire crews gather around maps laid out on vehicle bonnets before dispersing in teams of three, driving off-road into the forest to quell the smouldering embers. But for every fire they snuff out, a new one seems to burst into flame to replace it.

"The next one's to the left, quick, let's move." Two firefighters spring into action: one heaves a giant hose while the other hurries to the site of the next flare-up.

Dressed in red helmets, protective clothing and respirators, the Gironde fire and rescue department works systematically, weaving through the blackened forest 40 miles west of Bordeaux, which last week became the epicentre of the worst wildfires in modern French history.

The infernos that raged over the weekend, spitting flames 30m into the air, have largely been contained for now.

This is thanks to a massive deployment of more than 2,500 firefighters from across France, combined with cooler temperatures and a fortuitous 1mm of rainfall in the Cap Ferret region on Sunday night.

The pause has given fire crews – largely made up of volunteers, some of whom normally work as vintners and bakers – a much-needed moment to rest and see their families after days of deployment, often sleeping in military-style cots or in their fire trucks.

However, with another heatwave thought to be imminent, potentially sending temperatures soaring to 40C, fire chiefs fear they are not out of the woods yet.

"It's a bit like playing whack-a-mole," admitted Mathieu Jomain, a fire brigade captain in the Gironde fire and rescue service. "There is sometimes a feeling of losing the battle."

A further 4,000 people were evacuated from the beach town of Lacanau on Tuesday, adding to the more than 36,000 people who have been forced to evacuate their homes in France and Spain as wildfires tear through southern Europe.

Manuel Martinez, the mayor of Marcheprime in the fire-ravaged Gironde region, described being "at war with an enemy" as he called for more firefighting resources.

Meanwhile, Lt Col Eric Brocardi, a spokesman for the National Federation of Firefighters of France, described the race to contain the flames as a "David against Goliath" contest.

On Monday afternoon, Emmanuel Macron, the president of France, met with emergency services in the region, describing the situation as "more difficult than at any time since the Second World War".

Emergency workers have also extended a 16-mile firebreak from 160 to 230ft across to help "slow down" any new fires and stop them from "jumping" between trees, explained Wilfried Schneider, a fire brigade communications officer. It is testament to a monumental community effort, with farmers using agricultural equipment to uproot trees to enlarge the space.

"It's not just the fire crews," said Evan Quentin, 55, a firefighter from Cap Ferret. "There's a whole wave of solidarity, a whole chain that's formed naturally – farmers, winegrowers, people who work in bread-making – who come as volunteers, for example with the Red Cross, all the people working behind the scenes.

"The riot police from the beaches who come to help us, people who've said, 'I'm coming'.

"Even out in the field, there are people who bring us their water tankers; that means we don't have to drive kilometres to get water.

"It's vital. It's this spirit that keeps us going."

Of the thousands of firefighters mobilised from across the country, around 80 per cent are volunteers, said Capt Jomain, with many working through the night and spending time away from their families to try to bring the situation under control.

"I've been here for a week sleeping in my car," said one firefighter from Langon, a town 75 miles east of Lège-Cap-Ferret.

The man, who did not wish to be named, is married with two daughters. He said: "I send them messages from time to time. I just tell them things are OK, and that's it.

"I tell them not to worry, that everything's fine. I try to reassure them. That's normal. If we don't reassure them now, we'll never manage."

But, of course, these firefighters are facing a situation of life or death.

Corporal Laurent Manson, a 38-year-old volunteer firefighter in the Bouches-du-Rhône department of south-east France, was killed in an accident involving the water tanker he was driving on Monday.

He was the fourth firefighter to be killed since the wildfires broke out in the Gironde and Landes regions last week.

"I've seen things I've never seen before in recent days. Catastrophic situations. It's like a war," said the Langon firefighter, describing "monstrous" flames rising up to 30m into the air.

"It was very, very intense right from the start, especially the day [on Thursday evening] when all the houses burned in Porges. The fire was explosive and we tried to save every house we could, but they went up like matchsticks.

"I think we managed to save four or five, but we saw so many burn right next to them."

Does he fear for his wellbeing? "When you're no longer scared, that's when you're in danger," he said. "Yes, we are afraid, but that's what keeps us in check."

Mr Quentin knows all too well the dangers that come with the job. Two colleagues from his fire station, corporals Anthony Berthome and Wilfried Schmitter, both 34, were killed last week after their firetruck was engulfed in flames near Bordeaux-Mérignac airport.

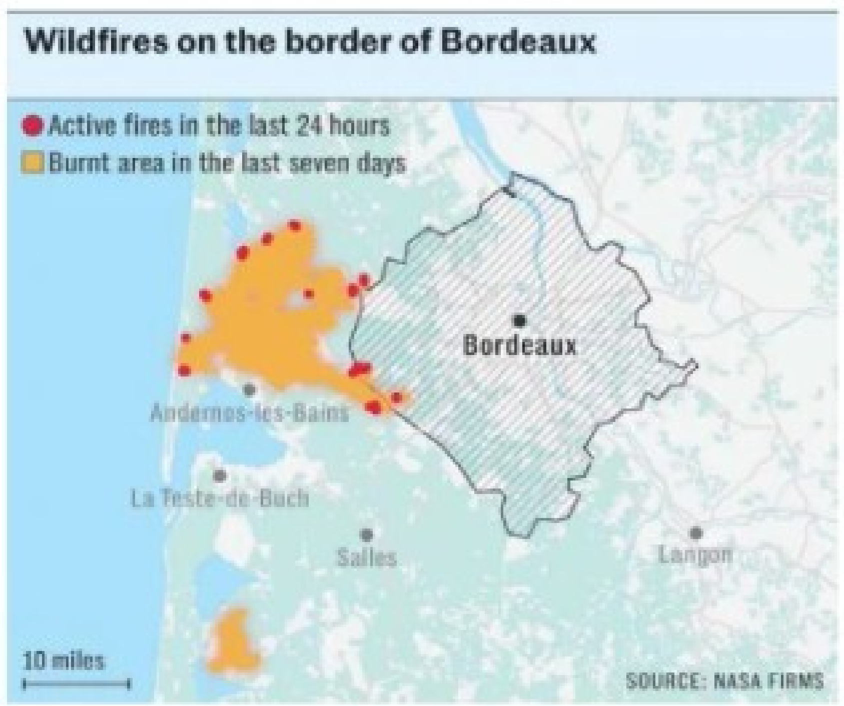
"They were two of my best friends," the father-of-two said, his hollow eyes gazing blankly into the distance. "I'm afraid of losing more friends. That's why I'm here.

"Right now, the fact that I'm here and that I'm busy, that's OK. It keeps me from crying at night. Later, it will be hard."

PHOTO BY SOPHIE GARCIA/EPA/SHUTTERSTOCK

French firefighters battle a wildfire spreading in Marcheprime, southern France

Wildfires on the border of Bordeaux


● Active fires in the last 24 hours
▨ Burnt area in the last seven days
Bordeaux
Andernos-les-Bains
La Teste-de-Buch
Salles
Langon
10 miles

SOURCE: NASA FIRMS

'It's vital. It's this spirit that keeps us going'

Earthquake rocks Japan with 10 feared dead in mall collapse

By **Allegra Mendelson**
ASIA CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 people remain unaccounted for after a shopping centre collapsed during a 7.1-magnitude earthquake in southern Japan.

The deadly quake struck Kumamoto Prefecture on Japan's southern island of Kyushu yesterday afternoon, killing one person and injuring at least a hundred others and prompted a tsunami warning.

Police said "quite a few" people were presumed dead at the mall in the town of Kashima. Most victims are believed to have been trapped when the shopping centre's second floor collapsed, according to Fuji TV, a local television station.

Footage of the mall, which has 200 stores, showed an entire side blown off and its steel beams exposed.

"A large cloud of smoke billowed up, and because the wind happened to be blowing and the wind direction was towards the shop, the area around us was in a state like volcanic ash was falling," a witness told broadcaster TBS. More than 50 people have been admitted to hospital with serious injuries.

Yoshitaka Matsuoka, a public relations official at a local hospital, told Japanese broadcaster NHK: "People with injuries such as fractures caused by furniture falling over in the earthquake are being brought in one after another.

"We have 400 hospital beds, but we are already running out of space."

Sanae Takaichi, the Japanese prime minister, said on social media that she "extends her heartfelt condolences to all those affected by the disaster".

"The government will work tirelessly through the night to swiftly assess the overall damage situation and carry out emergency disaster response measures, starting with the rescue and lifesaving of those affected," she wrote.

Ms Takaichi added that the government had established a designated emergency disaster countermeasures headquarters. Footage showed several collapsed buildings near the epicentre and large cracks in the roads.

One video also showed stone from the wall around Kumamoto Castle, one of Japan's best-known castles, crumbling to the ground in a plume of smoke. Power has reportedly been cut to nearly 50,000 homes and residents of Uki have also reported several fires breaking out.

The earthquake reached a shindo 7, the highest level on Japan's seismic scale, in the cities of Uki and Hikawa, with the aftershock registering at 5. Other cities, including Uto and Yatsushiro, registered a 6. At a shindo 7, the shaking is so extreme that it is impossible to remain standing and people are often flung into the air.

After the quake, Japan's weather agency issued a tsunami advisory for the coastal areas of the Ariake and Yatsushiro seas, and a government spokesman warned that metre-high waves were expected.

Mrs Takaichi said emergency services were still in the process of assessing the scale of destruction.

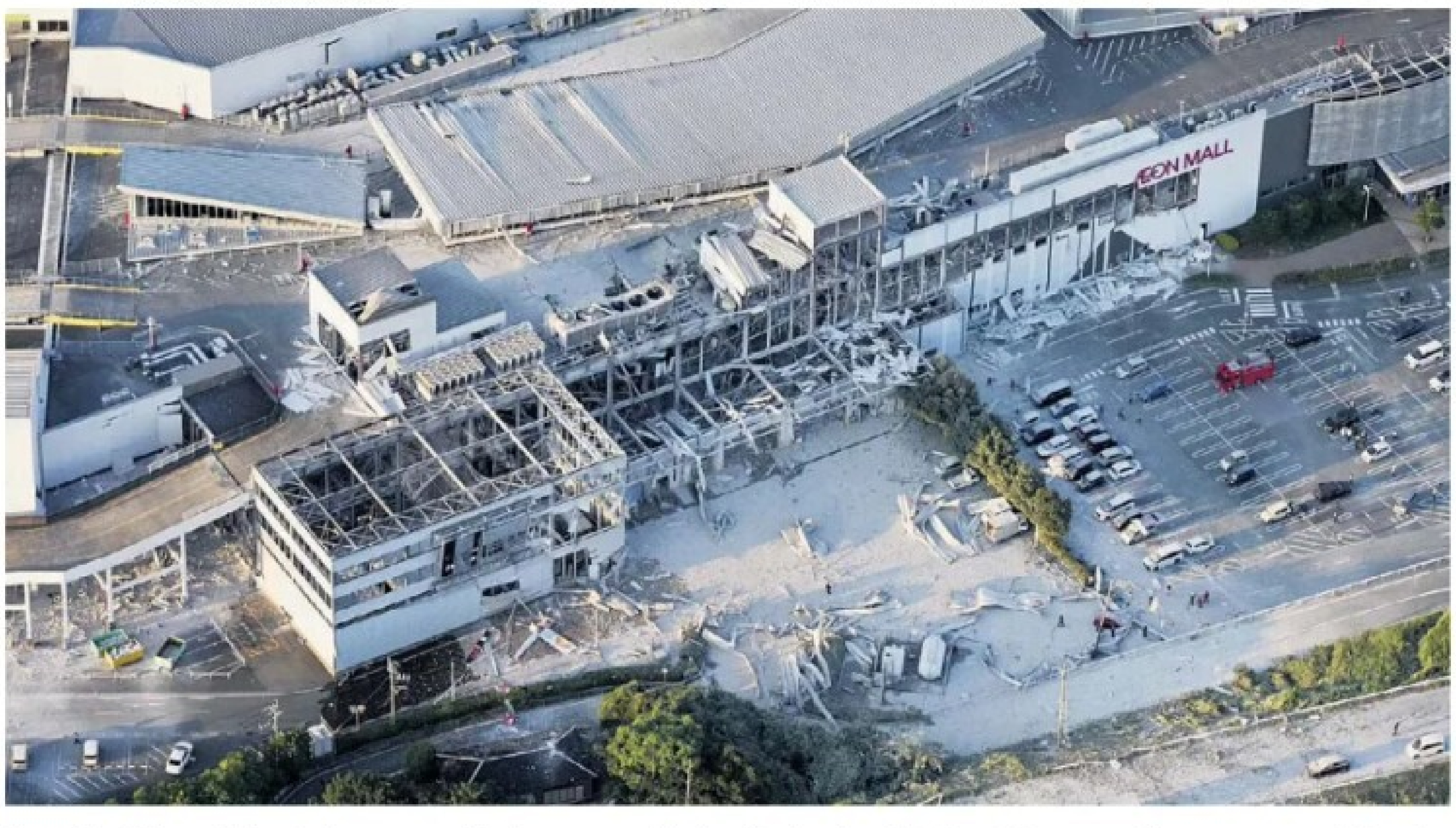
"Power outages and fires have occurred in some areas, and there has also been damage to roads and bridges and the collapse of buildings," she said.

"Above all, I ask everyone to take action to protect themselves, including evacuating to a safe location."

Many airlines diverted flights. Kyushu's rail service, JR Kyushu, said it had suspended several of its trains.

Japan is one of the world's most earthquake-prone countries, with a tremor occurring at least once every five minutes.

Kumamoto was hit by two separate earthquakes, including one that reached a magnitude of 7.0, in 2016.



Sanae Takaichi, left, promised her government would work 'tirelessly' to help victims. The collapsed shopping centre on Kyushu, above

They say that cheating is not cricket. But it is, actually

MICHAEL HENDERSON

'Clicky Ponting," they're calling him, after the great Australian batsman, and the name will resonate like a firmly struck cover drive. In cricket, which guards its reputation for fair play as keenly as a Duchess counts her jewels, the clicking fieldsman has earned himself an honoured place in the hall of infamy.

Playing for Saltburn second team against Norton in the North Yorkshire and South Durham League, the man was fielding at slip. As the ball passed the opponent's bat he appears to have clicked his fingers – a ruse to trick the umpire into thinking the batsman had hit the ball, and the wicketkeeper had claimed a legitimate catch.

What he didn't seem to know was that, prowling by the boundary, a Norton clubman filmed him. So now the world knows that, deep in the boondocks of Yorkshire, England's premier cricketing county, there may be cheats.

"It isn't cricket," people will say, as they always have done when miscreants cross an invisible line of acceptable conduct. But, in truth, it is – and it always has been.

Where did people first take to the game of bat and ball? On the downs of Sussex and Hampshire in the 18th century, when shepherds used crooks for bats, and gamblers wagered many a guinea on the outcome of matches, the serpent was there all along, in this very English Eden.

W G Grace, the Victorian doctor who created the modern game in his own image, would not have disowned the clicker. Having been dismissed by a bowler, with his stumps broken, Grace replaced the bails and said: "It's frightfully windy today."

On other occasions, he was apt to tell opponents who thought they had seen the back of him: "They've come to watch me, not you." So Clicky Ponting finds himself in the most exalted company the game can provide.

The Australians thought England were cheating in 1932 when Douglas Jardine instructed Harold Larwood, his star fast bowler, to use Don Bradman's torso as target practice. Bodyline, as it was dubbed, caused a diplomatic rumpus when England were victorious.

Not that it bothered Jardine, of Winchester and Oxford, who thought the Aussies were thoroughly wet. To this day his name is a swear word Down Under, just as many English cricket-lovers curse Alex Carey, the Australian wicketkeeper who stumped Jonny Bairstow at Lord's three summers ago when the Englishman thought the ball was dead.

The Aussies were certainly guilty of sharp practice at Cape Town in 2018, when their fielders used sandpaper to alter the condition of the ball. Steve Smith, the captain, was relieved of his duties and, living down to Jardine's estimation of his ancestors, had a jolly good blub when he was demoted. Another myth burnt to cinders: all Aussies are tough.

Tampering with the crimson rambler has always been a favoured ploy. David "Bumble" Lloyd, the coach-turned-commentator, once inspected an old ball during a championship match when he was an umpire. "If you don't take five wickets," he told an embarrassed bowler, who was expecting a rocket, "I shall have to report you."

"It's not cricket," they cry. But it is, actually, shaped by the habits of those who play, at Lord's or on some Yorkshire meadow. Clicky Ponting may have to face the beak, but he's added a new chapter to an old story.

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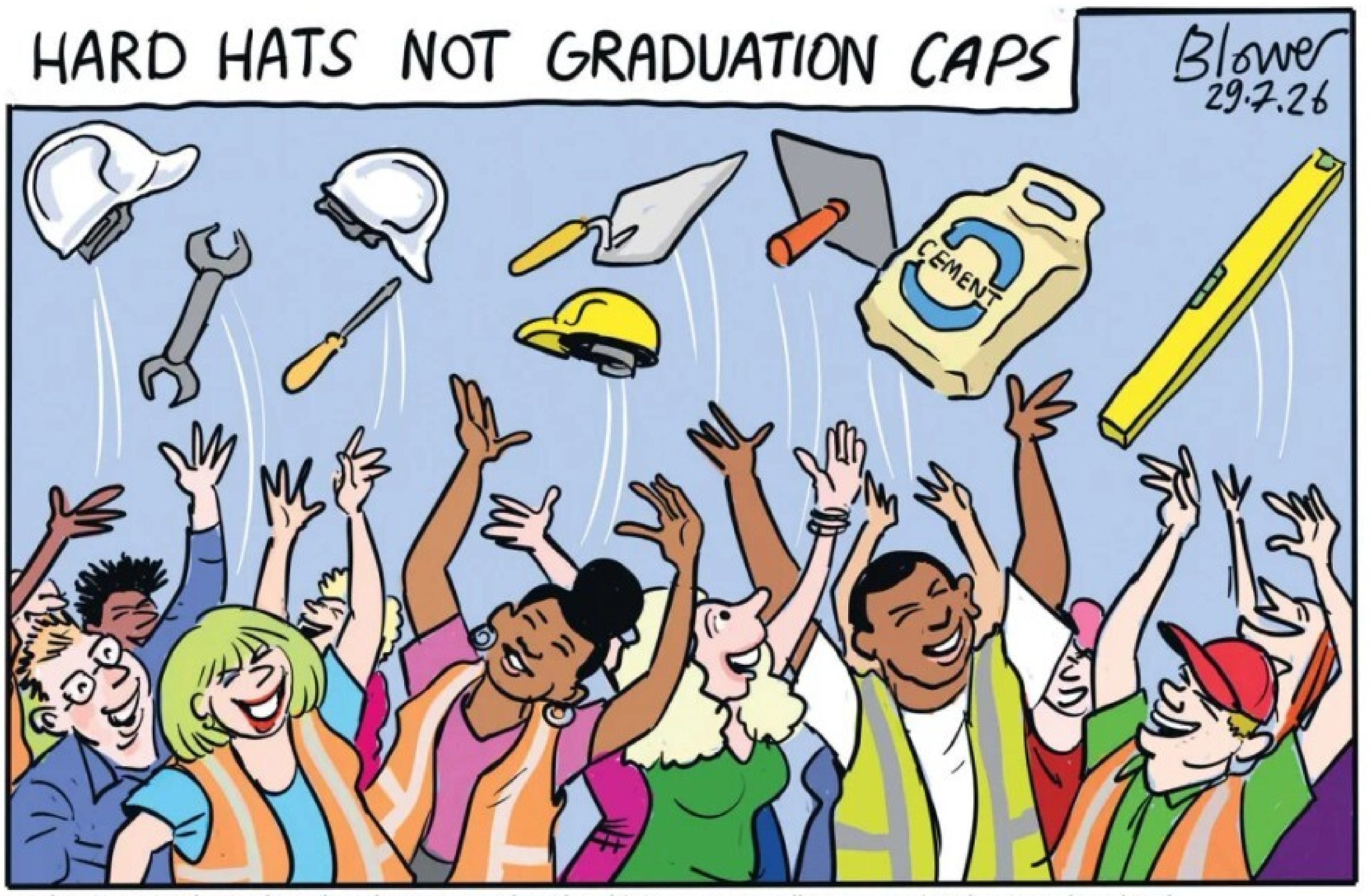
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Badenoch must pull back from the brink before she destroys the Tories

Runaway climate change is hurting the conservative way of life: Kemi must end her net zero purge

AMBROSE EVANS-PRITCHARD

Kemi Badenoch has chosen an abominable political moment to flirt with climate nihilism. The anti-green backlash has already peaked and electrotech is fast winning the global economic argument.

The great European fires of 2026 are psychologically different from earlier heatwaves. Sensors have recorded temperatures of 1,100C in the convection firestorms of the French Gironde, hot enough to create pyrocumulonimbus conditions that generate their own wind systems.

French firefighters say the furnace is throwing burning embers for several hundred metres like mortar fire. It is all too like the firebombing of Hamburg, Dresden or Tokyo in the Second World War.

You have to go back to the refugee flight from Normandy in the bombing and artillery battles of 1944 to surpass the mass evacuation of 220,000 people seen last week in Aquitaine. It is frighteningly new and dystopian to see fires beyond human control and licking the edge of a city such as Bordeaux.

Perhaps I am oversensitive. The smoke has reached our family farm in the Périgord Noir, 75 miles inland. Our farm has endured three heatwaves this year and a fourth is coming. In June we had five successive days of 39C, 41C, 41C, 41C and 40C on land already parched. Not far away, it reached 44.3C.

Our goats survived, but what if you rear chickens? Three million French broilers died in a matter of days. France has lost 9pc of its grain crop this year.

As my colleague Tim Stanley has been writing, runaway climate change is threatening a precious inheritance that conservatives profess to love: farming, natural food, tradition, the rural way of life. The political Right needs to rediscover its philosophical compass.

What can be more conservative than Edmund Burke's contract of eternal society? It entails a moral duty to pass on the world we have inherited, "a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead and those who are to be born".

This was the code of Margaret Thatcher, who led the world in repairing the ozone layer, her greatest accomplishment. "It is life itself that we wantonly destroy," she told the Royal Society in 1988.

"It is mankind and his activities which are changing the environment of our planet in damaging and dangerous ways," she said. Today's Tory millennials invoke her name with religious devotion while skipping over her scientific rigour.

My gripe has nothing to do with Kemi Badenoch's push for full drilling in the North Sea. That is a defensible policy, a small net plus for energy security, the trade balance and the climate itself. It displaces imports of oil and liquefied natural gas that have a higher CO2 and methane footprint.

Blaming oil and gas companies for supplying the energy needed to sustain a global economic structure built up over a century is a facile evasion best left to… well, the Left.

The proper course for market conservatives is to outcompete fossil fuels by embracing cheaper and better technologies – which now exist. It is to execute the task more competently by using price signals, with a pro-growth bias and broad popular consent.

If Badenoch's argument were that rigid climate laws are tying us in knots, perverting policy and fuelling lawfare, then I would agree. If her aim were to mobilise capitalism to turbo-charge our clean-tech successes, then I would applaud.

But that is not her message. Her outrage is directed at wind, solar, batteries and electric vehicles. There comes a point when you have to conclude that the Tories have gone Trumpian on the existential issue of our time, competing with Nigel Farage's crypto party for fossil funding and the backlash vote.

Badenoch's purge of Tory candidates who dissent – either because they think it unconscionable, or because they think it is economically harmful, or both (my view) – is a fateful step for the leader of a political party that has endured longer than any other on earth precisely because it is not narrow and factional.

It beggars belief that she has blackballed Sir Grant Shapps, a dutiful former defence secretary and party chairman. The Conservative Party has been a broad church for two centuries, tolerating eccentrics and troublesome backbenchers. Thatcher cleared out the Heathite "wets" from her cabinet in 1981, but she never expelled them from the House, even though they were a constant thorn in her side and would ultimately plot their revenge.

There are two parallels in history that should make Badenoch think again. Neville Chamberlain had his own purity test after the Munich Agreement, mobilising state intelligence and phone-tapping and using all the tools of black propaganda in a vindictive purge of anti-appeasement MPs. Winston Churchill escaped narrowly.

Benjamin Disraeli's purity test on agricultural protectionism succeeded in toppling Robert Peel in 1846, but the attempt to stop the clock of industrialisation rendered the party unelectable for 20 years. The Tories had misread the zeitgeist.

Meanwhile, Labour is becoming a broader church after the sectarian cul-de-sac of Corbynism. Andy Burnham faces an open goal if he wants to recapture the Blairite centre of British politics. Are the Tories walking into a trap?

Badenoch must explain her meaning when she wrote in *The Telegraph* that "if someone still believes in net zero targets that make energy more expensive and are destroying industry, they are not coming back".

What if you are a conservative who thinks the larger economic danger for the UK is to sit out the global electrotech revolution? I don't wish to rehearse the debate over energy costs. Suffice to say that EVs are unstoppable.

Sales of petrol and diesel (ICE) cars in China crashed to 37pc in June. In Europe they crashed to 30pc. The International Energy Agency says small EVs are now cheaper than small ICE cars in most emerging markets. Only tariff barriers can stop a clean sweep at this point.

Suffice to say too that solar and batteries paired as quasi-baseload are already the cheapest form of electricity for 80pc of humanity living in low latitudes. It no longer has anything to do with subsidy or climate policy.

The raw cost of solar panels in Asia is £100 per kilowatt. That is why farmers and small factories are taking matters into their own hands and going off grid. Badenoch faces the risk that voters will start to see Britain's bet on electrotech and North Sea wind as a success story by the late 2020s. By then the anti-green backlash in the West will probably have burnt itself out – excuse the bad pun – and the new messiah may be a second Greta.

> She faces the risk that voters will start to see Britain's bet on electrotech and North Sea wind as a success story by the late 2020s

Kemi Badenoch is articulate and talented. She is formidable at the despatch box. It is a thankless task to lead the Opposition at the best of times and she has to deal with a raging culture war and Reform on her right flank. Perhaps I am mistaking how far she is really going down this reactionary rabbit hole.

I wish Kemi well, but I would caution her to play a longer game and show more respect for sophisticated free-market greens because otherwise she may preside over the destruction of her ancient and once-great party. It's not too late to pull back from the brink.

READ MORE *at telegraph.co.uk/opinion*

The North isn't grim – it's just addicted to taxpayer money

ANNABEL DENHAM

Arriving at the new No10 North last week, Andy Burnham gushed: "I cannot tell you what a proud moment this is. I think this might be the best day of my life."

The new office is intended to symbolise a shift in Britain's political centre of gravity: a northern counterweight to Westminster and a rebuke to the idea that England is run exclusively from London. But it also reinforces the idea that Britain is divided between a prosperous South and a neglected North. Nearly 90 years after George Orwell travelled to Wigan, much of Westminster still imagines the North through his pages – soot-blackened terraces, smoking chimneys, pit villages and chronic industrial decline. The underlying assumption is that England remains divided by the Trent.

The first PM in 50 years to represent a constituency in the North West, Burnham has built his political career on this proposition. And on the headline figures, he looks to have a point. London's productivity is almost 30 per cent higher than the UK average, while the North East is around 15 per cent below it. Blackpool, Burnley and Liverpool remain among England's most deprived local authorities.

None of this is in dispute, but you might expect someone so proudly Northern to resist caricaturing the places he claims to represent. Productivity, GDP and earnings data tell us only so much. People want a decent home, a tolerable commute, enough disposable income to enjoy themselves and, on these metrics, the picture is more complicated.

Consider two professionals. One earns £50,000 in Reading; the other £40,000 in Newcastle. On paper, the southerner is yards ahead. But once housing costs are taken into account, the calculations change. Average private rents in the capital are three times those in the North East. A commuter from Reading to Paddington will spend over £5,500 on an annual rail season ticket. One travelling from Bolton into Manchester pays closer to £1,300. Housing, transport, childcare, restaurants and pubs – all are on average cheaper in the North.

There is another difference. Much of northern England now depends on the state not just for welfare but employment. In the North East, around one in four employees work in the public sector. Thousands of households have careers in the NHS, schools, councils and universities – secure jobs with gold-plated pensions, generous sick pay and flexible working arrangements.

Six years ago the Equality Trust huffed, in its patrician way, that the gap in disposable income between London and the rest of Britain was a "damning indictment". Yet compare North Yorkshire – where gross disposable household income is roughly £27,000 – with Luton, where it is less than £20,000. Every region has pockets of prosperity – and deprivation. For every Blackpool, there is a Clacton.

Across much of northern England there are leafy suburbs, thriving market towns, affordable homes and areas of great affluence – not to mention some beautiful countryside.

Now Burnham wants more public money and more fiscal devolution – but this risks entrenching the economic model the North already has: a larger state sustained by transfers from elsewhere, with little impetus to grow the private sector. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland offer a glimpse of where that leads. We already redistribute tens of billions of pounds every year between regions; Burnham wants to replace competitive bidding with formula funding on the grounds that poorer places should not have to compete for investment. But should funding really be detached from performance?

If we want genuine convergence, there is a better approach. Make it dramatically easier for productive businesses to grow in Northern cities by reforming planning, improving commercial development and encouraging private investment, rather than dreaming up ever more inventive ways to expand the state's footprint.

FOLLOW *Annabel Denham on Twitter @AnnabelDenham1*
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THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
ESTABLISHED 1855

Britain should save its single-sex schools

Since at least 1256, when Abingdon School opened its doors for the first time, Britain has been home to single-sex schools. They have proved bastions of excellence and opportunity, places rich in history that have shaped some of this country's most famous sons and daughters, from Winston Churchill to Jane Austen. But as an analysis by this newspaper has revealed, such institutions may soon be a thing of the past.

While the overall number of private schools has remained relatively constant over the past decade-and-a-half, the number of single-sex private schools has collapsed. Falling pupil numbers and changing parental mores mean that, if trends continue, independent girls' schools could be extinct in little more than 50 years, with their male equivalents dying out soon after.

Some – particularly those on the Left – might welcome this. But anyone who cares about education should be profoundly concerned.

Study after study indicates the same thing: single-sex education can be a great boon for children. Girls and boys in single-sex schools consistently achieve higher exam grades than their peers in co-ed institutions. More likely to be freed from romantic distraction and some of the intense social pressures that come with adolescence, pupils generally report being better able to focus in class.

Critics accuse single-sex schools of being relics of the past. But the reality is rather different. Single-sex schools can break down the stereotypes surrounding subject choices that may otherwise afflict status-conscious teenagers. In an all-girls' school there is no such thing as a "boys' subject", and the uptake of maths and physics is often higher than the national average. This can only be beneficial to the individuals concerned and the country as a whole. Pastoral care, too, can be tailored towards issues specific to one sex, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues such as body image or puberty.

From Rugby School in *Tom Brown's School Days* to Enid Blyton's *Malory Towers* and the thinly-veiled version of King Edward's School, Birmingham, in Jonathan Coe's *The Rotters' Club*, the single-sex school has long held a cherished place in the English imagination.

Were the decline of such establishments to continue, Britain would lose not merely a host of high-quality educational institutions which have served communities for generations, but a part of the country's soul.

NHS pension reform

Labour entered government in 2024 believing that large pay rises for doctors would bring harmony to the NHS. This assumption has proved false. Doctors have continued to strike, and the enormous costs of Labour's pay deals are becoming ever clearer.

Last year, taxpayers handed NHS workers a record £18bn in gold-plated pension contributions, an increase of 34 per cent since 2023-24. This is in large part due to the eye-watering settlements agreed with resident – formerly junior – doctors. They have seen their average pay rise by almost 29 per cent in the past three years.

Under the NHS pension scheme, workers are entitled to a guaranteed, inflation-proofed income for life, based on their average earnings across their career. The Government already pays employer pension contributions of 24 per cent – something unheard of in the private sector – and the dramatic hikes in resident pay will see average career earnings soar.

This is unsustainable. Rather than simply handing over huge salary increases with no conditions attached, the Government should have made reform of the NHS pension scheme a prerequisite of any pay deal. By shifting away from its current model to a defined contributions scheme, £11bn a year could be saved.

The amount of money spent on the NHS has never been greater and yet NHS patients face some of the worst survival rates in the developed world. Instead of funneling funds towards staff pay, patients would be better served by directing them towards diagnostic equipment and hospital beds.

Despite what doctors' unions think, there are not endless funds available to gild their retirement.

A chance find

Crossing the Rubicon with a legion, on his way to Rome, Caesar exclaimed "*Alea iacta est*" – "The die is cast!" And now a beautifully made cubic Roman bone die has been found at the Magna Roman fort by Hadrian's Wall near Haltwhistle in Northumberland. The pips on the half-inch cube are laid out as we would expect now – with the face showing five pips having one in each corner and one in the middle. Opposing faces bear a total of seven pips: five and two, three and four, six and one. Each pip is neatly carved as a central dimple surrounded by two little grooves, just like the mysterious prehistoric Cup and Ring carvings found on rocks in Britain. It seems as though it was cast and lost in the same throw, falling perhaps into the grass on the misty borders of the Empire to lie unseen for two millennia.

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Letters to the Editor

The PM is right to call for a shift in Britain's education priorities

SIR – I disagree with almost everything Andy Burnham says, but he is right about Tony Blair's obsession with getting half of school leavers to go to university ("Burnham axes Blair's university vision", report, July 28). Many emerge from three unproductive years with little to show for it besides huge debt.

Young people should be encouraged to take up an apprenticeship as soon as possible so they can qualify as plumbers, electricians and carpenters, for instance. By their early 20s, they will have a considerable advantage over many graduates.

Charles Puxley
Easton, Berkshire

SIR – The Prime Minister's call for better technical education is not new.

The old tripartite system had within it specialist technical schools. Then, in 1983, the government launched the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), which moved away from the standard academic curriculum towards a "work-focused" approach. The scheme was trialled in a few schools, then extended nationally to include more institutions.

I worked in one of the pilot schools, and saw first-hand how the scheme improved both the retention and motivation of pupils who did not wish to follow an academic path. These pupils had often been disruptive and prone to truanting.

TVEI introduced them to a new curriculum and – at my school, at least – was a huge success. Attendance rose, examination results improved and large numbers of young people found permanent employment.

As with many such initiatives, continued success depended on political will and financial backing. When one or both disappeared, the scheme failed. To succeed again, capital support and long-term planning will be required. I wonder if either is possible at the present time.

John Kerry
Fleckney, Leicestershire

SIR – It is welcome that the Prime Minister seeks to reform education and welfare. Two things need to change.

First, the erstwhile polytechnics should return to the role they once fulfilled so effectively. Secondly, young welfare claimants must be interviewed in person. This will make it harder to game the system, diverting funds from those who need them to many who do not.

Tony Jones
London SW7

SIR – Andy Burnham is keen to promote "hard-hat" working, yet it is generally accepted that jobs such as bricklaying, plumbing and road maintenance place a heavy strain on the body. Will he also introduce a tiered state pension age, meaning that those who have held these jobs – in contrast with, say, people who have worked from home – can retire earlier?

Michael Turner
Winchester, Hampshire

The value of land

SIR – Andy Burnham has been flirting with the idea of a land value tax (Letters, July 28), but how would the land actually be valued?

We live in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on 20 acres that cannot be built on and have no commercial use beyond grazing or a cut of hay. Would we be taxed at agricultural rates, or would some Whitehall notion of "amenity value" be conjured up instead – for land we are forbidden from developing?

As we are about to endure the valuation circus for the new high-value council tax surcharge, we can assume that the process of pricing property that rarely sells is highly subjective. A land value tax would inflict something similar on millions of acres.

Perhaps ministers should work out how to value land before they start taxing it.

Robert Gill
Tring, Hertfordshire

HMRC surprise

SIR – Yesterday my wife and I received a notice from HMRC about child tax credits. Given that we are both pensioners and our children are in their thirties, this did come as something of a surprise.

On reading through the notice, I discovered that it was a final statement of tax credits to which we were entitled in the financial year 2004-5. Apparently, we were paid too much in child tax credits for that year – but HMRC managed to recoup that from us.

We are reminded that we can challenge anything that is wrong in the statement. Funnily enough, we cannot quite remember.

Leslie Cadwallader
Oswestry, Shropshire

Lace menace

SIR – A priority for our Prime Minister when dealing with China should be the absurd length of laces on that country's exported footwear.

Yet another pair of trainers I've bought has laces so long and trailing that they are unmanageable, necessitating repeated stops to fiddle with them. Is this a cunning device to trip up our nation?

Brian Emsley
Kennett, Cambridgeshire

SIR – New deck shoes invariably come with leather laces, which rapidly come untied even with a double knot. Cord replacements provide a remedy but should not be needed.

David Redston
Horsham, West Sussex

A statue of Joyce, by Marjorie Fitzgibbon, on Dublin's North Earl Street

A scholar's tip for tackling James Joyce

SIR – Many years ago, a college roommate – a budding Joyce scholar – told me that the best way to tackle *Finnegans Wake* was to open the book at random and begin reading from that point. Should one begin to find the going too difficult, close the book, reopen it elsewhere and proceed as before. "It's a circular thing," was his mantra. I wonder whether Graham Weeks's professor (Letters, July 24), who claimed to have never read the book from start to finish, used the same method.

Adrian Mallen
East Boldon, Co Durham

Families must play a larger role in elderly care

SIR – Charles Moore is right (Comment, July 28): part of the answer to the problem of caring for the elderly is for more families to help.

Yet again, reality is pressing hard on the ideals of the students of the 1960s who, in pursuit of nirvana, wanted to liberate themselves from normal human obligations, including to other members of their family.

The sooner we recognise that those ideals were not a permanent advance in the human condition but a temporary madness, the better.

David J Critchley
Winslow, Buckinghamshire

SIR – The renewed debate about how to fund adult social care raises a question: why are we still discussing solutions that were identified 15 years ago?

Andrew Dilnot's Commission on Funding of Care and Support published its landmark report in 2011, after an exhaustive review.

Its central recommendations – a lifetime cap on personal care costs and more generous means-testing – won support, were embodied in the Care Act 2014 and later legislated for, only to be repeatedly postponed and ultimately abandoned. Some reforms did follow, such as enhanced rights for carers and deferred payment arrangements. However, the commission's central objective – to protect individuals from catastrophic care costs, while creating a sustainable funding system – remains unrealised.

When I was a GP, I saw daily how the inadequacies of social care reverberate throughout the NHS. Delayed hospital discharges, overwhelmed family carers and increasing pressure on general practice are symptoms of the same political failure.

Before considering new levies or taxes, ministers should explain why the principal reforms Parliament has already endorsed were not implemented.

Dr Mark Durling
Sheffield, South Yorkshire

SIR – Lord Moore points out that inheritance is not a human right but a piece of luck. I await the outcry from the lucky.

Peter Cave
London W1

Addicted to fossil fuels

SIR – I agree entirely with David Frost ("Trashing our economy won't save the planet. It will just make us poor", Comment, July 28).

As a former oil company executive, I can confirm that the world is addicted to fossil fuels. The connection between these fuels and a prosperous economy is clear, so any attempt to reduce consumption will mean a lower standard of living for everyone.

What is also evident is that anything we do in Britain to reduce carbon emissions will have no effect on climate change unless China, the United States, India and the rest of the world do the same – which they won't, because it would damage their economies.

I'm afraid the world is stuck with fossil fuels until a truly viable alternative is found, and that doesn't look likely anytime soon.

Stan Kirby
East Malling, Kent

SIR – When, as a farmer, I look out of my window across Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, I see tens of thousands of hectares being taken out of productive agriculture and dedicated to solar panels, biodiversity net gain and maize for energy digesters.

Of course climate change is challenging, but before too long, food supplies will become very tight. We must grow more here.

Stephen Fell
Thorganby, North Yorkshire

Proof of identity

SIR – I am disappointed that the plan for us all to have identity cards has been shelved. I have a driving licence and a passport, both held for well over 50 years, but these are not always enough to prove who I am. My husband is a priest and we lived in tied housing. I did not personally pay utility bills or council tax, so banks would not accept any ID.

A young man used to help in our garden. He had special needs and didn't drive. He bought himself an expensive passport, not to go abroad, but just to have an identity document that he could use to open a bank account.

There are some people who genuinely would benefit from an official ID. Germans hold them without a second thought.

Daphne Rose
Woodbridge, Suffolk

There and back again

SIR – In 1959 my Hull school organised an exchange with a school in Frankfurt. Not aware of any paperwork, our German master and his wife took five of us 14-year-olds in his Morris Oxford shooting brake ("Health and safety be damned: school trips that made us who we are today", Features, July 28).

It took nearly three days each way, travelling at a maximum speed of 60mph on the autobahns. On a free day two of us hired canoes on the Main, and went back and forth amid the barge tows. We all came home safely.

When I related this tale to the school's headmaster in the 2000s, he just put his head in his hands.

Martyn Green
Little Kingshill, Buckinghamshire

SIR – Your writers' accounts of school excursions reminded me of my year group's day trip to Boulogne in the early 1980s. Two items returned intact: a crisp 50-franc note, carefully ordered by my mother from our local bank, and a can of lemonade as a special treat.

The first was because there was nothing I wished to buy. The second was because I had no idea how to open it.

Kate Pycock
Ipswich, Suffolk

Burnham may be the best PM for education since 1980s

Putting technical learning at the heart of schools will help tackle the country's youth unemployment rate

KENNETH BAKER

Andy Burnham has launched a revolution in education by proposing to insert into every comprehensive a curriculum of high-quality technical, industrial, vocational, hands-on learning.

He has been the only prime minister since 2000 to speak up for this sort of education.

He is appalled that he has inherited a youth unemployment rate of 16.4 per cent, whereas Germany has a rate of only 7 per cent. Something has to be done immediately to reduce this.

Students leaving school at 18 who go straight into unemployment will probably suffer for the rest of their lives, as they are seen as a failure at an early age. Some have submitted scores of applications for jobs but have got nowhere.

Burnham has said: "We're putting practical technical education back to where it belongs – not as a second thought but as a first choice." And he is quite specific in saying in how soon it will happen: "From the age of 14 we will be giving children a new option in schools: keeping core maths, English and science but combining them with a real hands-on technical education."

This is the most significant change since the changes I introduced in the 1980s of setting up a national curriculum, making schools independent of local authorities and giving headteachers control of their budgets.

Fifteen years ago, Ron Dearing (former head of the Post Office) and I agreed that the things most missing in secondary education were technical schools. In 1945, there were 300 of them but they were all closed within six years due to snobbery, as parents didn't want their children to go to shabby premises and do dirty jobs with greasy hands. A huge mistake that Germany did not make.

In 2009, we established University Technical Colleges (UTCs) for students aged 14 to 18 where the student will spend up to two days a week in a workshop, making and designing things, working on projects that local employers bring in, visiting companies and getting work experience. To support this work, we created the Baker Dearing Educational Trust, which today delivers technical education opportunities through UTCs and to young people across England.

This means that by the age of 18 they have employability skills – they can make and design things with their hands, they work in teams, engage in collaborative decision-making and they are entrepreneurial, creative and imaginative. We have high levels of attendance as the students know they are working towards a job.

There are 44 UTCs with 21,000 students. I am very proud of the fact that half of our schools last year did not send one student into unemployment and our Neet (not in education, employment, or training) figures vastly outperform national averages.

The key to the success is local employer engagement. Amazon likes UTCs so much it has appointed senior managers to serve on UTC boards. Our training programme for engineering teachers receives strong support from the Gene Haas Foundation, which has links to the international machine tool manufacturer and F1 team. Morgan Sindall Infrastructure has a national partnership with Baker Dearing. Also, the media giant Global sponsors one of the UTCs.

In Barrow-in-Furness, local employers such as BAE struggle to recruit the number or quality of students for their burgeoning order books. In September this year, a school there will open a UTC Sleeve, offering the technical education curriculum used in UTCs alongside its usual academic pathway; 90 of the 120-strong year 10 cohort have selected to follow the sleeve pathway.

Since Andy Burnham launched the MBacc in Manchester about two years ago, we have worked closely with him to build the necessary curriculum and the relations with local employers. Another UTC Sleeve will open in Greater Manchester very soon.

These two examples show how Burnham's plans can be achieved.

These changes mean that fewer students will be going to universities and that is welcome as there is a high level of student unemployment and graduates are taking on jobs well below their talents. Many will now try and get a degree apprenticeship or higher-level apprenticeship at 18. Industry needs high-level apprentices, such as the student who recently left UTC Portsmouth with a salary above the national average. Little wonder that many students are not thinking of going to university.

Andy Burnham is right to say: "We will value the hard hat as much as the graduation cap".

Local authorities and trade unions should welcome this significant devolution of power, as many metro mayors already have. I urge both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats to give their full support to this very significant change.

Rt Hon Lord Baker was Secretary of State for Education in Margaret Thatcher's government. He is the co-founder of the Baker Dearing Educational Trust

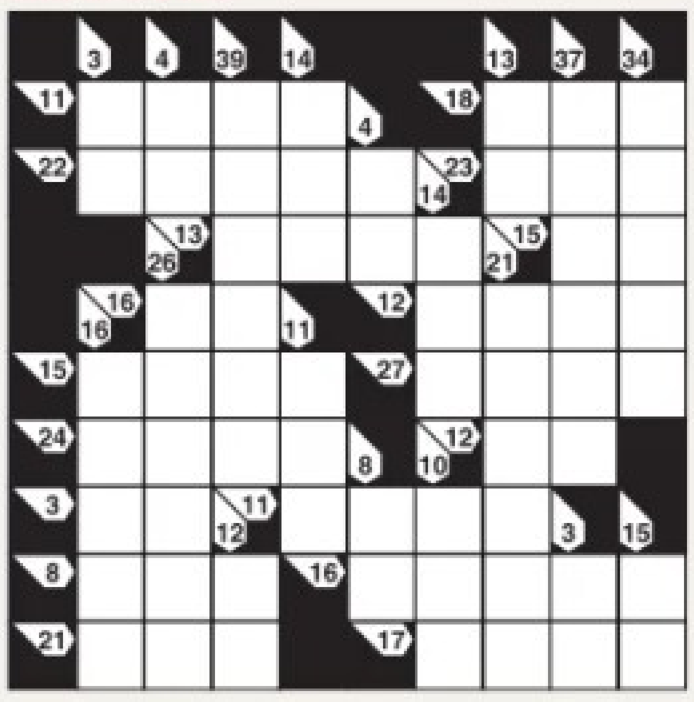
READ MORE *at telegraph.co.uk/opinion*

Puzzles, Mind Games & Telegraph Toughie

KAKURO

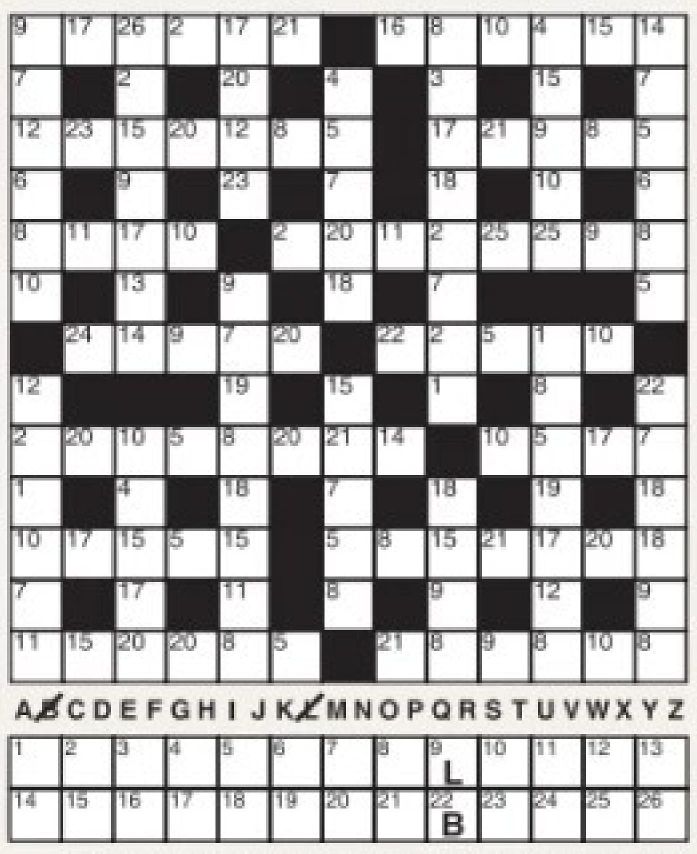
To solve kakuro you must enter a number between 1 and 9 in the empty squares without repeating a digit. The clues are the numbers on the black squares and are the sum of the solution numbers. The clue pointers indicate the direction of the answers. A block of two squares with a clue of 3 will solve as 2,1 and a 5 will produce 4,1 or 2,3. A 4 can only be 1,3, never 2,2. *Solution tomorrow.*

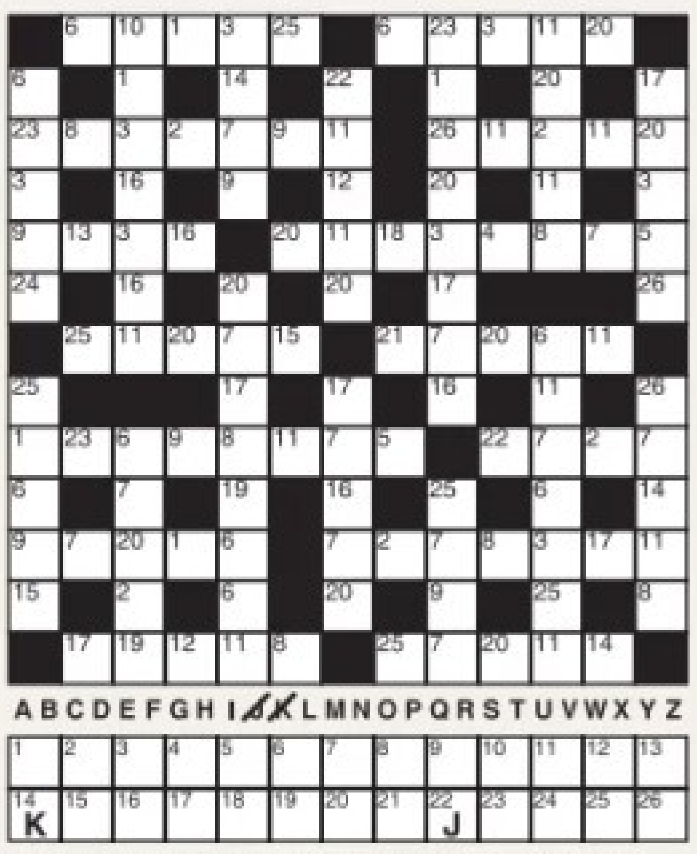
MODERATE NO 5826



CODEWORDS

Numbers are substituted for letters in this crossword grid. In the smaller key grid some letters are solved. Use these as clues to complete your first word. This will solve more letters that you can then enter in the grids. *Solutions tomorrow.*



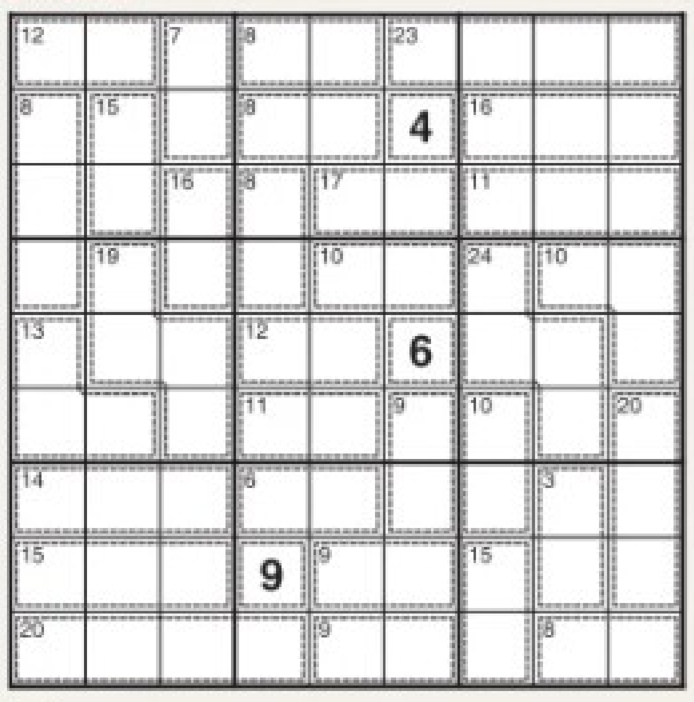


For today's **right-hand** codewords solutions call **0905 757 0131.** For up to five extra letter clues call **0905 757 0130** or text **DTCODE** (leaving no spaces) to **64343.** Calls cost £1 per minute, plus network access charge; texts cost £1, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon - Fri, SP: Spoke Ltd – Helpline 0333 202 3390.

KILLER SUDOKU

Your clues are the caged numbers that represent the sum of the numbers within the cage. As in standard sudoku, each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9. *Solution tomorrow.*

MODERATE



SUDOKU

To solve this puzzle each 3 x 3 box, each row and also each column must contain all the numbers from 1 to 9. There are numerous strategies to help you solve sudoku. *Solutions tomorrow.*

REGULAR NO 7396

	8		5				7	6
5	2							9
	4			7				
			4	5	7			
	7			3			8	
			2	8	1			
				6			4	
3							6	7
7	5				8		2	

TOUGH NO 7396

7								3
5	4			7				1
	6						4	
4			1		9			
1			4		3			5
	7						5	
2		8		6		9	3	7
3								8

Sudoku Solution For today's tough sudoku solution call **0905 757 0136.** Calls cost £1 per minute, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon – Fri. SP: Spoke – 0333 202 3390.

ANAGRAMS

Each of the anagrams below spells out a term related to decorating. *Solution tomorrow.*

SETH DUETS _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _

AGAINST KEMP _ _ _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _

LIP OR LEARNT _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ _

MIND GYM

NO 4896

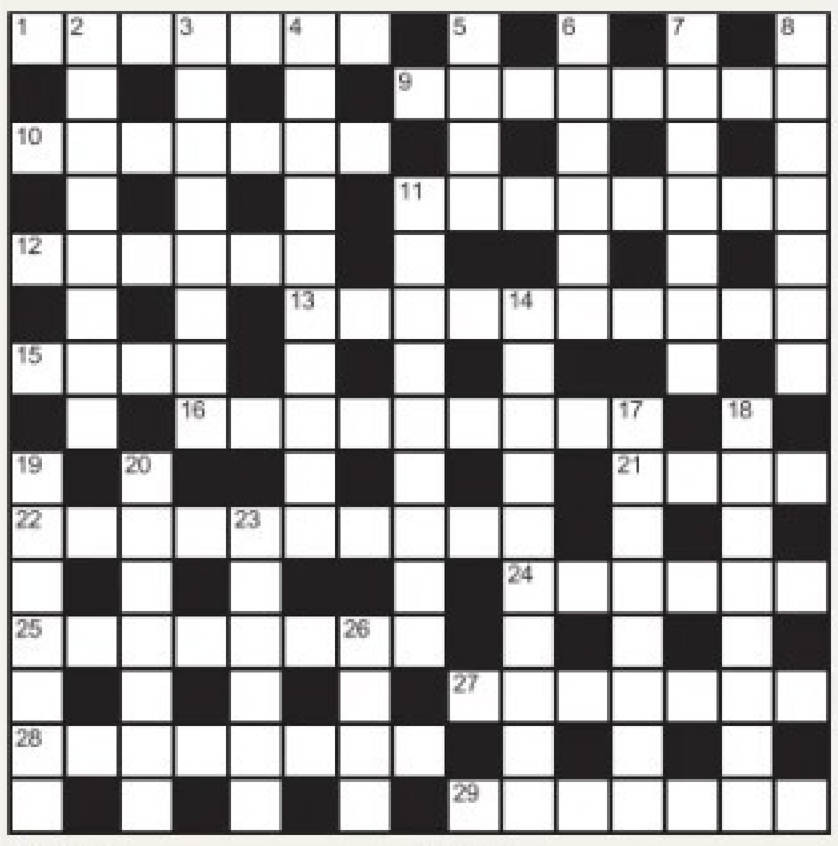
Start on the left with the given number and work your way across following the instructions in each cell. Target time: 30 seconds. *Solution below.*

BEGINNER	7	x5	TRIPLE IT	-57	3/4 OF THIS	x1.75	TRIPLE IT	-137	÷13	X BY ITSELF	ANSWER
INTERMEDIATE	108	÷9	x4.75	TRIPLE IT	+85	√	x7	-21	11/13 OF THIS	DOUBLE IT	ANSWER
ADVANCED	102	16/17 OF THIS	x5.75	-328	7/8 OF THIS	√	x19	+118	HALVE IT	÷12	ANSWER

TELEGRAPH TOUGHIE

NO 3730

ZENAS



Across

1 Jail troops involved in criminal blast (7)
9 Check ladies perhaps coming around, I see (8)
10 Slyness of way wife's abandoned riches (7)
11 Home counties expert leaving India for time to study (8)
12 One taking medal carried by posh car around Belgium (6)
13 Maybe Mimi appears for the audience with a lock of hair (10)
15 Look, part of Suez agreement needs overturning (4)
16 Agents had redeployed theatre worker (5,4)
21 Warning in exhortation to workers? (4)
22 Access passwords? (4,6)
24 Half-cut man enthralled by bitter purpose (6)
25 Flyer has time for second check (8)
27 Alarm about adult contracting onset of infectious disease (7)
28 Confirm implication of pay freeze? (8)
29 Refuse to weaken (7)

Down

2 Voluntary pilot on manoeuvres round America (8)
3 Quiet walks in abattoir (8)
4 Behind former leading lady's own fragrance (10)
5 Face nuisance in hearing (4)
6 & 7 Down Mum meets her mate, an inactive investor (6,7)
8 Rector originally means to leave for retreat (7)
11 Free programs divide China? (9)
14 Leader with vast organised forced labour movement (5,5)
17 Old Republican in party beginning to notice trouble, one perhaps getting hammered (8)
18 Some glass ain't even broken (8)
19 Goddess representing fish (7)
20 Promise of upside-down cake kept by British hotel (7)
23 Cross lake going for take-off (6)
26 Hospital usher grasps sponge (4)

Toughie No 3729

A	R	T	N	O	U	V	E	A	U	■	B	L	U	B
G	■	R	■	B	■	E	■	R	■	■	■	I	■	U
E	L	A	T	E	■	N	E	S	T	L	I	N	G	S
D	■	I	■	S	■	I	■	E	■	I	■	G	■	S
■	■	T	R	E	A	S	O	N	■	G	R	O	U	T
U	■	R	■	■	■	O	■	I	■	H	■	■	■	A
B	E	E	R	C	A	N	■	C	A	T	C	H	I	T
I	■	S	■	O	■	■	■	■	■	E	■	A	■	I
Q	A	S	I	D	A	S	■	B	U	R	R	I	T	O
U	■	■	■	G	■	W	■	R	■	■	■	L	■	N
I	X	T	L	E	■	A	L	U	M	N	U	S	■	■
T	■	H	■	R	■	L	■	I	■	O	■	T	■	U
O	V	E	R	S	E	L	L	S	■	T	H	O	R	N
U	■	T	■	■	■	O	■	E	■	C	■	N	■	I
S	L	A	G	■	S	W	A	R	T	H	I	E	S	T

Help with clues
Single clues 0905 757 0126.
All Across/Down clues 0905 757 0127.
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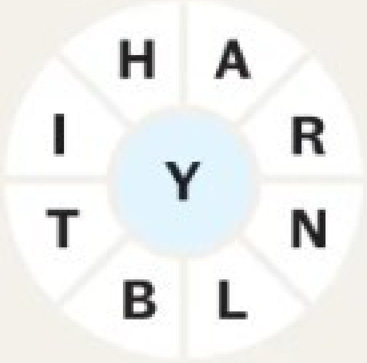
PANAGRAM

Create words of four letters or more, always using the centre letter. Proper nouns and plurals are not allowed, and you can only use each letter once per word. Can you find the nine-letter Panagram? *Answers must be in the Oxford Dictionary of English. Solution tomorrow.*



Up to 5 words - Word Finder, 6 - Wordsmith, 13 - Word Wizard, 20 - Word Master, 27 - Word Genius, 34 - Word Perfect

Telegraph

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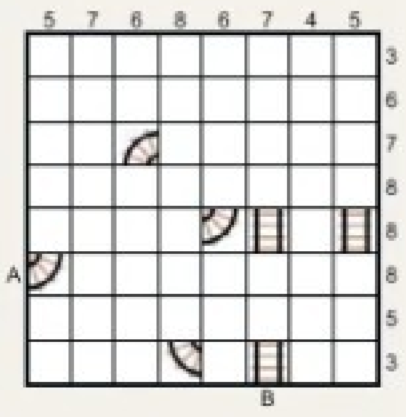
TRAIN TRACKS

Lay down tracks to allow a train to travel from A to B. Only use straight and curved rails and the track cannot cross itself. The numbers indicate how many sections of rail go in each column and row. *Solution tomorrow.*



MINI SUDOKU

Fill in the grid in such a way that every row and column and every 2 x 3 box contains the numbers 1-6. *Solution tomorrow.*

MODERATE NO 4665

4			2		
	3				
			5	6	
		6			
				3	
		4			2

PLUSWORD

NO 1529

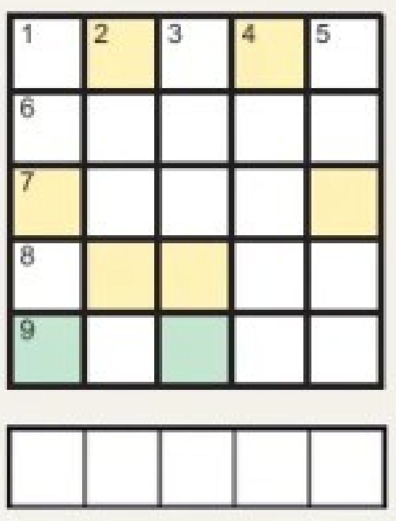
Solve the crossword, then use letters in the shaded squares to complete the additional PlusWord. A letter in a green square appears in the same column in the PlusWord as it does in the crossword; a letter in a yellow square appears in the PlusWord, but in a different column than it does in the crossword. There is only one possible answer for the PlusWord; it may be that the PlusWord contains letters that aren't found in the crossword, but it can always be worked out logically without guessing. *Solution tomorrow.*

Across

1 Nancy ___, first woman to sit in the House of Commons
6 Subject or topic
7 Tibetan priests
8 Opposite of "omega"
9 Weasel-like creature

Down

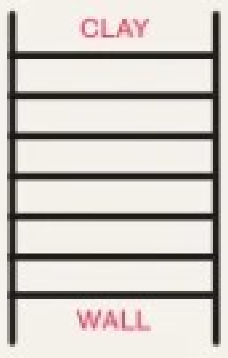
1 A salt (anag.)
2 Verb used in the Ten Commandments
3 Speed, e.g. of a piece of music
4 Nebraskan city
5 Took (an exam) again



WORD LADDER

Change just one letter to go from the top word to the bottom word. Each step must be a valid word and you cannot change the order of the letters. There are clues below for each rung, but they are not necessarily in order. *Solution tomorrow.*

SCAR, STITCHED JOIN, BANG, KILL, HEALTHY, US NAVY UNIT MEMBER



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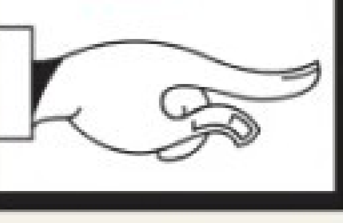


THE SOLUTIONS

Yesterday's solutions

Sudoku Regular and Tough No 7395

8	9	1	5	7	3	6	4	2
7	5	6	1	4	2	8	9	3
4	3	2	9	6	8	1	5	7
5	4	8	7	3	9	2	1	6
6	7	9	2	5	1	3	8	4
1	2	3	6	8	4	9	7	5
9	6	4	8	2	5	7	3	1
2	1	5	3	9	7	4	6	8
3	8	7	4	1	6	5	2	9

2	9	1	8	6	7	3	5	4
3	8	5	2	4	9	6	1	7
4	6	7	5	1	3	8	9	2
5	1	2	9	8	6	7	4	3
9	4	6	3	7	5	1	2	8
7	3	8	4	2	1	5	6	9
6	2	3	1	9	8	4	7	5
1	5	9	7	3	4	2	8	6
8	7	4	6	5	2	9	3	1

Word Ladder: Huge, luge, loge, lose, loss, boss, bows, bowl.

Anagrams: 1. Hourglass 2. Seismograph 3. Breathalyser.

Panagram: Hindering, dingier, grinned, herding, rending, dinger, dining, dinner, ending, endrin, engird, ginned, girned, hiding, hinder, hinged, reding, riding, ringed, deign, diner, dirge, grind, hider, hindi, hired, indie, indri, ridge, rigid, deni, dine, ding, dire, gird, grid, herd, hide, hied, hind, nerd, nide, rend, ride, rind.

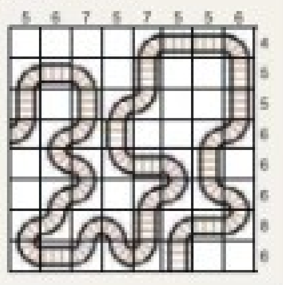
Today's Mind Gym
Beginner: 16 **Intermediate:** 154 **Advanced:** 16

PlusWord No 1528

S	L	O	G	S
C	A	B	L	E
A	T	E	I	N
M	E	L	T	S
P	R	I	Z	E

Topaz

Train Tracks



Killer Sudoku

5	6	4	7	3	1	8	9	2
8	1	7	6	2	9	3	5	4
9	2	3	4	8	5	7	6	1
1	4	5	9	7	2	6	3	8
3	7	9	1	6	8	4	2	5
2	8	6	5	4	3	9	1	7
7	5	2	3	9	4	1	8	6
6	3	1	8	5	7	2	4	9
4	9	8	2	1	6	5	7	3

Mini Sudoku No 4664

1	4	3	6	2	5
2	5	6	4	3	1
6	1	5	2	4	3
4	3	2	1	5	6
3	2	1	5	6	4
5	6	4	3	1	2

Codewords 1 and 2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Q	U	K	P	Y	T	D	M	E	C	I	S	L

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
H	N	V	A	W	J	X	R	G	B	Z	O	F

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Y	R	C	B	Z	I	V	O	F	J	E	H	Q

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
D	A	L	K	N	X	T	G	U	M	S	P	W

Kakuro No 5825

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	4	2	■	■	7	2	8	9	■
■	8	3	■	3	5	6	9	4	8
■	9	8	5	1	2	■	■	7	9
■	5	1	3	2	■	1	3	8	■
■	■	■	8	9	■	3	4	■	■
■	■	5	9	7	■	5	2	1	4
■	9	7	■	■	4	2	1	3	6
■	5	6	1	8	9	4	■	2	1
■	■	8	4	9	7	■	■	5	9

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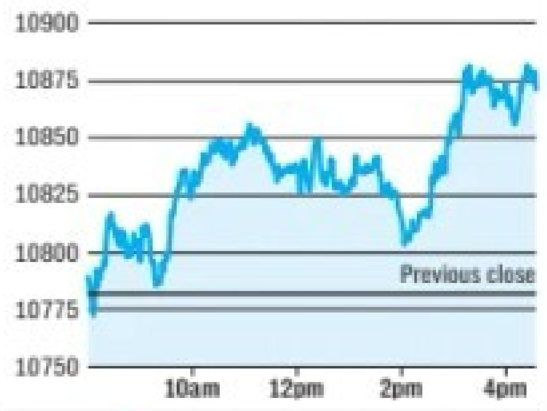
Business

MARKETS

FTSE 100



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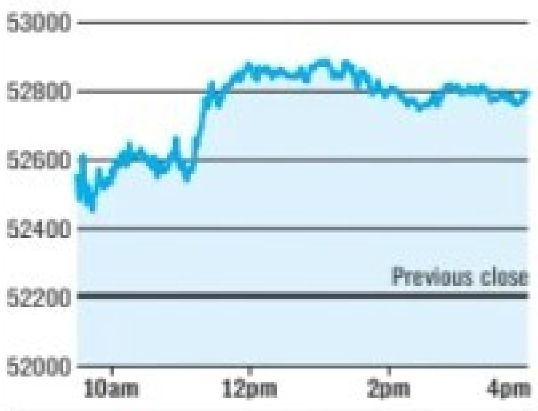
+89.27 (+0.83pc)

52WkHigh	10934.94	
52WkLow	9027.94	
Yield	2.95pc	-0.03
P/E Ratio	16.11	+0.01

BIGGEST RISER
Croda Intl
3160p
+235 (+8.03pc)

BIGGEST FALLER
Barclays
505p
-25¾ (-4.79pc)

DOW JONES



52747.32
+537.24 (+1.03pc)

52WkHigh	53289.30
52WkLow	43340.68

Index	Value	Change
FTSE 250	24004.78	+106.68 (+0.45pc)
FTSE All Share	5839.12	+45.18 (+0.78pc)
FTSE All Share Yield	2.99	-0.03
FTSE Eurotop 100	5013.90	+12.88 (+0.26pc)
Nikkei 225	62364.92	-2566.27 (-3.95pc)
EURO STOXX 50	6289.51	+7.30 (+0.12pc)
S&P 500	7428.78	+15.60 (+0.21pc)
Nasdaq	24876.91	-55.17 (-0.22pc)

CURRENCIES

£$
Rate 1.3292
Change -0.10¢

£€
Rate 1.1674
Change -0.23¢

Page 22

COMMODITIES

GOLD
$4027.24
(£3030)
-51.24 (-1.26pc)

BRENT CRUDE
$84.09
(September)
-4.27 (-4.83pc)

Page 22

Water palaver
Britain has a chronic issue with water supply – and a lack of solutions to solve it
Philip Johnston
Page 21

Burning money
The true cost of the wildfires tearing through France and Spain will haunt their economies for years to come
Page 19

Raise income tax to plug £24bn hole, say economists

Surging inflation will erode value of government spending over next four years, think tank warns

By **Tim Wallace**

ANDY BURNHAM has been urged to raise income tax as a £24bn hole looms in Labour's spending plans.

Leading economists warned the Prime Minister today that he must increase taxes or cut departmental budgets as surging inflation erodes the value of government spending commitments.

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (Niesr), a think tank, said Mr Burnham would need to find an extra £24bn by the end of the decade or accept real-terms cuts to planned spending on hospitals and schools. Inflation is poised to hit 3.8pc by February next year, Niesr predicted, and will not fall back to the Bank of England's 2pc target until 2029.

That means budgets set out by Rachel Reeves will not go as far as planned, leaving a £24bn hole in the Government's spending plans, including healthcare, defence and schooling, by the end of this decade. The think tank urged Mr Burnham to break Labour's manifesto commitment and raise income tax to address the shortfall.

It leaves Mr Burnham and John Healey, his Chancellor, facing a decision on whether to find billions more to plug the gap or scale back spending plans.

Stephen Millard, the deputy director of Niesr, said the best way for Labour to fund the shortfall was to break its 2024 manifesto pledge and raise income tax.

"Corporation tax in particular has a negative effect on growth. Increases in VAT have effects on expenditure and demand, so you probably don't want to be increasing that at a time when demand is possibly weakening anyway.

"And, of course, VAT is highly regressive, it affects poorer people much more," Mr Millard said.

"Rises in income taxes do have some effect [on growth], but the effects tend to be very small," he added.

An extra penny on the basic rate of income tax, from 20pc to 21pc, would raise an extra £8.2bn per year for the Government, according to estimates from HMRC.

Increasing the 40pc rate to 41pc would bring in £2.1bn, with a move from 45pc to 46pc for the additional rate raising £230m.

Income tax is already the Government's biggest revenue-raiser, raking in an anticipated £360bn this year.

Rising inflation is putting more pressure on government borrowing costs, as major investors demand a higher return to fund British borrowing.

The Treasury pays more than 4.9pc on its 10-year debt – significantly higher than any other G7 nation.

Invesco and Rathbones, two British fund managers, have cut back their holdings of gilts over fears of inflation, according to Bloomberg.

Households are also feeling the pressure from higher inflation, even before any additional tax rises to cover the Government's plans.

Disposable incomes are poised to rise by 1pc this year, then just 0.1pc in 2027, as workers' earnings barely keep pace with rising prices.

Unemployment will rise to 5.3pc by the end of this year, Niesr predicts, up from 4.9pc currently.

Annual pay growth is expected to slow from 4.3pc to 3.3pc in 2027.

The situation for young people is particularly fraught.

Britain has more than one million 16 to 24-year-olds who are not in employment, education or training, also known as Neets.

Niesr expects the figure to stay at this level for the rest of the decade, potentially rising to 1.1 million.

Ill health is often cited as the reason to stay away from the jobs market, amid sharp rises in poor mental health.

It comes as Mr Burnham pledged to give more young Britons a better start in the jobs market by overhauling the school curriculum with more technical education.

A Treasury spokesman said: "We are determined to support the Bank of England in achieving its inflation target.

"Fiscal discipline is the bedrock of economic stability and national security. That is why we will meet our fiscal rules, while continuing to invest in the public services people rely on."

Gerard Lyons: Page 21

THE LEGO GROUP/HUNTER SIMMONS/PA WIRE

Hunt for the Lego LPs Singer Olivia Rodrigo at the Los Angeles launch of a worldwide hunt for 333 Lego vinyl records. They will be hidden in record stores with clues on social media.

Ashley makes luxury push with £160m Burberry stake

By **Tom Haynes**

MIKE ASHLEY has taken a major stake in Burberry as he seeks to expand his luxury retail empire.

The billionaire's Frasers Group disclosed a 4.2pc interest in the struggling trench coat maker yesterday worth around £160m. The purchase will make Frasers, which also owns Sports Direct, Flannels and House of Fraser, Burberry's fifth biggest shareholder.

Burberry, founded in 1856, has struggled recently after an ill-timed attempt to push further into the luxury market coincided with a slowdown in global demand for high-end goods.

Last year it posted a £66m loss and cut 1,700 jobs. Shares in the group are down 16pc so far this year.

However, there have been signs of a recent turnaround, with an unexpected return to sales growth in the three months to June thanks to higher sales of its signature trench coats. Burberry shares rose 5pc after Mr Ashley's stake emerged, gaining 48p to 1,154p a share. Frasers' shares were up 19.50p to 799p.

Mr Ashley's investment is the latest push by the maverick retailer to get a stronger foothold in luxury retail brands, which helps cement Frasers' relationships with suppliers.

Burberry products are already sold through Flannels, while Frasers has signalled ambitions to become a much bigger player in luxury retail.

The Burberry swoop also underlines a drive by Michael Murray, the chief executive of Frasers and also Mr Ashley's son-in-law, to move the company further upmarket.

Frasers owns around 37pc of British luxury brand Mulberry and more than 30pc of German fashion giant Hugo Boss, where it is pursuing a takeover despite opposition from the company's board. The company has also been linked to a bid for Harvey Nichols, the British department store chain.

However, Frasers' luxury push has not always gone to plan.

The company bought online luxury retailer Matches in late 2023 but placed the business into administration less than three months later after concluding the turnaround would require too much investment. An investment in Debenhams also turned sour.

Frasers, which was founded by Mr Ashley but has been run by Mr Murray since 2022, has become one of Britain's most active retail investors through a string of minority stakes.

As well as Hugo Boss and Mulberry, the group has built holdings in a range of retailers including Asos and Boohoo.

Frasers has built its Burberry stake via financial derivatives, which give the company the right to buy shares at a certain price. Burberry and Frasers declined to comment.

Grid bosses tried to water down rules before power blackout scare

By **Matt Oliver**

BRITAIN'S grid operators sought to weaken the electricity system's shock absorbers just months before they breached safety limits during June's heatwave, new documents show.

In a report published last year, the National Energy System Operator (Neso) said the risk of a severe power disruption had increased from a one-in-27-year event to a one-in-seven-year event. This followed a review that uncovered a sharp rise in the likelihood of more than one power station failing at once. But, public documents show Neso then successfully applied to Ofgem, the energy regulator, to reduce the shock absorbers used to stabilise the grid.

This shock-absorbing system, known as inertia, is a stabilising force provided by power plants with spinning turbines.

Ultimately, the grid operator argued that using a different kind of back-up system – ultra-fast batteries – would provide better value for money, saving about £96m a year.

However, even after these changes, Neso admitted the likelihood of a major drop in the grid's frequency – which can lead to power cuts – had still increased overall. Ofgem approved the changes in May, less than a month before a heatwave put Britain's grid under serious strain in June.

This included an event on June 23 in which grid engineers admitted "system security was compromised".

The revelations will add to questions about energy security after whistleblowers alleged the rapid growth in wind and solar farms on the system had left Neso "flying blind" and struggling to manage the system. Yesterday, a spokesman for Neso insisted it was "false" to suggest the grid operator had not "fully secured" the system. They said its security had not been diminished. But Kathryn Porter, an independent energy analyst, accused the public body of hiding behind "legalistic" definitions to avoid proper scrutiny.

Neso said that to fully mitigate the risk of multiple plant losses it would need to procure an extra three gigawatts of ultra-fast battery backups – an amount that was neither commercially available nor financially attractive.

Instead, the grid operator said it could reduce the risk of a serious system incident from a one-in-seven-year event to one-in-23 years by procuring an extra 200 megawatts of battery backups. While Neso insists its physical grid defences have not been weakened, the public body's own data say the UK is facing simultaneous power plant failures far more frequently than previously assumed, and that this risk is too expensive to fully secure against.

Ofgem agreed and approved the changes in late May. A spokesman for the regulator said it was "inaccurate to suggest any decisions approved by Ofgem prioritised cost and practicality over system safety".

A government spokesman said it was "confident in our security of supply arrangements, and that Neso have the tools they need to manage the system".

£96m

Sum that Neso hoped to save by switching to batteries, rather than spinning turbines, to stabilise the grid

Builder offers to pay buyers' £40k school fees

By **Pui-Guan Man**

A HOUSEBUILDER is offering to pay buyers more than £40,000 in private school fees for every home sold as developers battle a stagnant London property market.

Berkeley Group has offered to cover up to two years of tuition fees at St John's Preparatory and Senior School for buyers at its Trent Park housing estate in Enfield, north London.

The fees range from £4,500 a term for pre-prep pupils to £5,800 per term for children aged 11 and over at the senior school, meaning the offer could save buyers up to £41,750 on private education costs, including VAT. The Trent Park properties start at £760,000 for one bedroom and cost up to £1.8m for a five-bedroom property. They are set within a 413-acre country park and include landscaped gardens.

Berkeley's move to pay private school fees is just one of a series of unconventional perks being offered to prospective buyers, according to property search website Ldn.one, as developers struggle to shift newly built homes.

Some buyers are now being offered a year of council tax or service charges paid on their behalf, according to Ldn.one. Others are being offered rate discounts and full home part-exchange schemes, which allow people to trade existing homes directly with a housebuilder that acts as a cash buyer. Developers have also included gifts such as a free Polestar 2 car, worth £44,000, consultations with interior designers and e-bikes, *The i Paper* reported in January.

A record number of new-build homes in London have gone unsold in recent months, according to Molior analysts.

Molior's data show 4,629 recently completed homes in London failed to find a buyer during the second quarter of this year.

Work on another 2,704 homes was halted with them only partly built.

Average selling prices in London dropped by 3.7pc in the year to May, the steepest fall since 2023. Berkeley Group declined to comment.

China beats US ban with AI chip breakthrough

By **Chris Price** *and* **James Titcomb**

CHINA has achieved a breakthrough in developing technology crucial to the AI boom, overcoming US efforts to limit Beijing's access to the systems.

China's chip giant Shanghai Yuliangsheng has started production of deep ultraviolet lithography machines, according to The Information, a tech publication. These machines, which can reach the size of a double-decker bus, use high-powered lasers to imprint designs on to silicon wafers, which are used to make chips.

Until recently, only Western companies and allies of the US had the capability to produce these machines. The most advanced versions of the technology have largely been the preserve of companies such as Dutch giant ASML and Japan's Nikon.

These machines have been cut off from China by US export controls, preventing their production of advanced chips as Washington seeks to slow the development of AI in the country.

Semiconductor stocks plunged following the report. Trading was briefly halted on South Korea's benchmark Kospi index after it suffered a collapse of nearly 11pc overnight, following a bleak day on Wall Street. Advanced semiconductors, such as those used in AI chips, rely on minuscule circuits, invisible to the naked eye. They can only be manufactured by directing tiny lasers on to microchip wafers, a process known as ultraviolet lithography.

Xi Jinping, the Chinese president, has made mastering the technology a national imperative in an effort to compete against the US in AI. America's lead is in part because of China being unable to access the most advanced chips made by tech giant Nvidia.

Jing Jie Yu, an analyst at Morningstar, said China's tech breakthrough had sparked concern among investors for major semiconductor stocks.

He said: "We believe the market was likely spooked by the progress of China's chipmaking equipment capabilities."

MoD races to build bomb factories as supplies run low

By **Matt Oliver**

MILITARY chiefs are racing to start construction of up to six new explosives factories within months as Britain scrambles to rebuild its munitions stockpiles.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) will confirm today that it has commissioned 22 companies – including small businesses and large defence contractors – to rapidly produce plans for the plants.

The companies, which cannot be named for security reasons, have been challenged to explain how they will get building before the end of this year.

They will each receive up to £300,000 for feasibility studies and potentially another £5m each to draw up detailed blueprints if they are selected for the final project.

The MoD said it was also working with the Office for Investment – the "concierge service" for businesses set up by Labour – to fast-track businesses through planning and regulatory processes. Each factory is expected to take one and a half to three years to complete.

It comes as Britain scrambles to rebuild its stockpiles after donating large volumes of weaponry to Ukraine to aid its defence against Russia. The new so-called energetics factories will produce the explosive materials that go into munitions such as Nato-standard 155mm artillery shells, which are in high demand across Europe.

At least 13 potential locations have been identified by the Government, including brownfield land in Grangemouth, Stirlingshire, where one of Britain's last oil refineries shut recently.

Luke Pollard, the minister for defence readiness, said the plans were expected to create "at least 1,000 high-skilled jobs in the future in communities that have long been the backbone of British industry".

UK MOD

Flare for performing A Royal Australian Air Force F18 Super Hornet on a flypast over Mindil Beach in Darwin for exercise Pitch Black. The event brings together 21 nations, including the UK, up to 100 aircraft and around 2,500 personnel, making it one of the largest air exercises in the Indo-Pacific region.

Glencore accuses ex-refinery boss of £180m oil fraud

Energy giant claims Prax owner told them the firm could pay its debts before huge crude delivery

By **Louis Goss**

THE former boss of a collapsed Lincolnshire oil refinery has been accused of overseeing a $236m (£177m) fraud.

Glencore claims Winston Soosaipillai, the former owner of Prax refinery, was "centrally involved in the fraudulent conduct" that resulted in the FTSE 100 commodity giant losing millions of pounds worth of oil.

In submissions to the High Court, Glencore said it was "induced by fraudulent misrepresentations" into delivering more than $236m worth of oil to Prax's Lindsey oil refinery near Grimsby before it collapsed in June last year.

The company says it was misled about Prax's financial position, including claims that the oil refinery was solvent and able to pay its debts.

The submissions to the High Court said: "Prior to the liquidation, Mr Soosaipillai was, in fact, conducting the business of the Prax Group ... fraudulently." Lawyers acting for Glencore said "representations" made to the company "were untrue and misleading". They claimed that Mr Soosaipillai "knew this".

Glencore is now seeking to recover any of the crude oil that is still being held by Prax and seize any refined products that were produced from the crude it delivered to the refinery.

The Anglo-Swiss company argues that it continued to own the crude oil while it was being processed by Prax's Lindsey oil refinery.

It says Mr Soosaipillai's misrepresentations voided Prax's contracts, meaning it should be able to recover its product.

Prax collapsed suddenly last year with more than £1.5bn worth of debts after "material irregularities" were discovered in a loan facility it had with HSBC. The discovery led to the loan being cancelled, prompting a cash crunch.

In its lawsuit submitted to the High Court, Glencore is seeking to rescind its contracts with Prax to immediately recover its oil before Prax's assets are carved up and distributed between its other creditors.

Lawyers acting for Prax argued that Glencore should be treated the same as all other creditors.

They claimed that allowing Glencore's request "would be a recipe for chaos and undermine the logic and policy of the collective insolvency process".

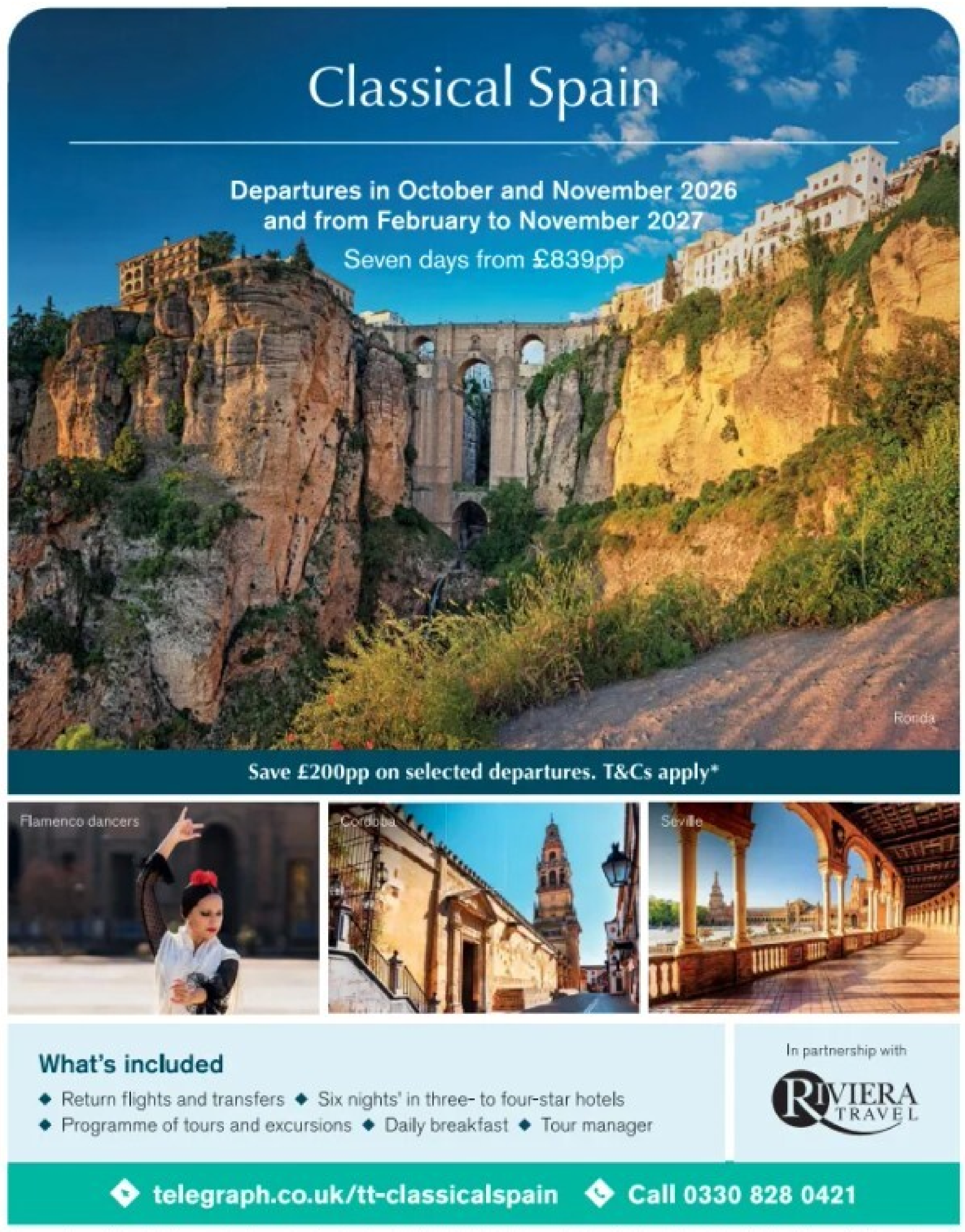
The lawyers for Prax added: "Any fraud that may have taken place would, if demonstrated, be a misfortune that befell all the creditors of the company in common. Glencore has suffered no special hardship that was not suffered by the creditors as a whole."

Prax was started by Mr Soosaipillai and his wife Arani in 1999. The couple met while studying accounting and finance at the University of Kent, before starting a business together that initially owned petrol stations.

The company acquired the Lindsey oil refinery from French oil giant Total in 2021 as part of a series of debt-fuelled deals which saw it expand into a sprawling £10bn conglomerate with operations worldwide.

Mr Soosaipillai and his wife each own 40pc stakes in Prax directly and own the remaining 20pc of shares through trusts in which they are both trustees.

A representative for Mr Soosaipillai was contacted for comment.



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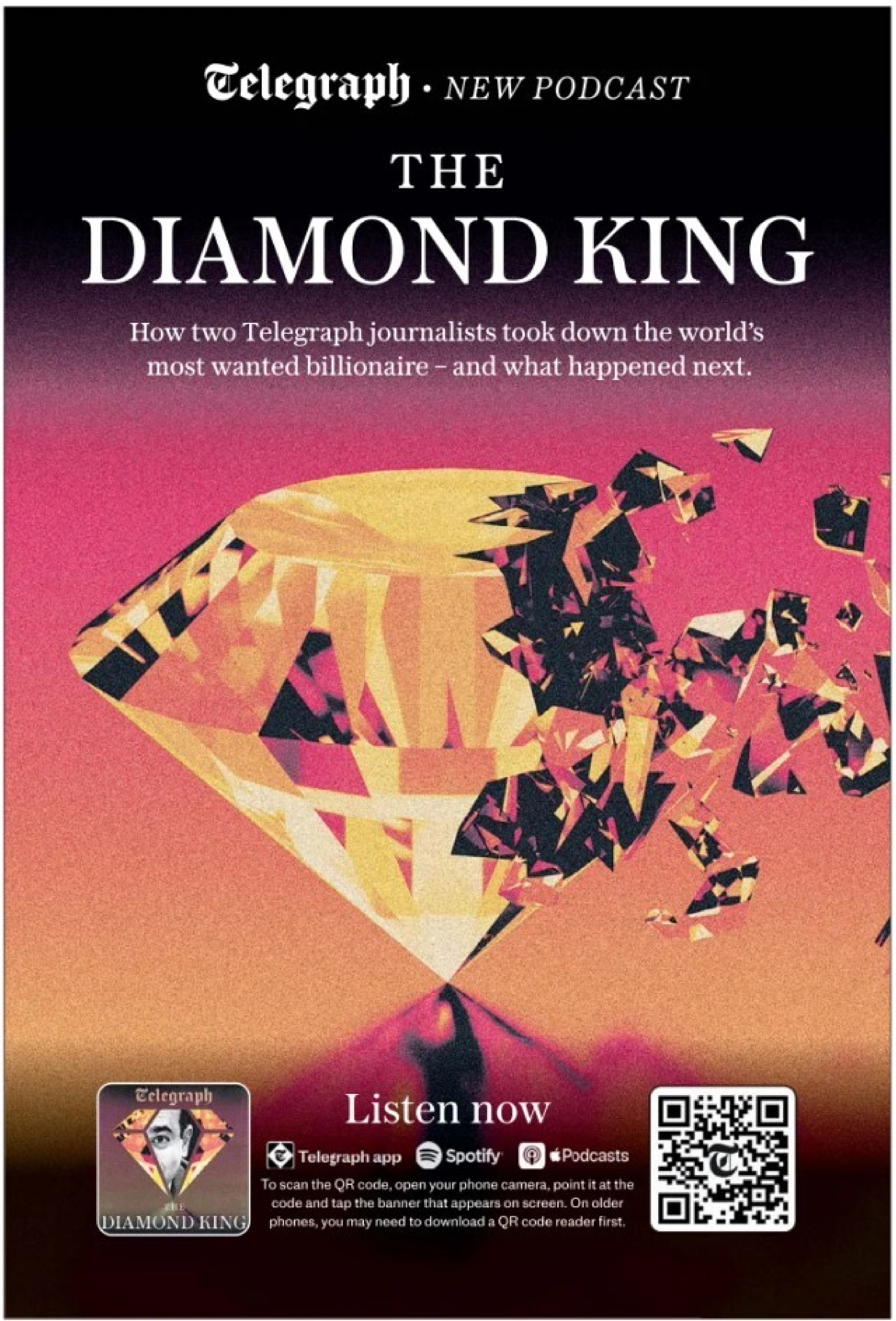

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Fires strike Europe with 'economic thunderbolt'

France and Spain will count the cost only when the blazes are out, write *Hans van Leeuwen* and *Cameron Henderson*

REUTERS/PEDRO NUNES

MARK HAND runs walking and food tours in Bordeaux. He's located a safe distance from the wildfires, but not at all from their economic fallout.

The 34-year-old says bookings at his business, Tours in Bordeaux, are already down by 40pc.

"For one of our most popular walking tours, we'd normally have 20 to 30 people at this time of year. This morning we had six. I've had 10 people cancel next week," he says. "This city relies heavily on tourists – we get about 6.5 million tourists per year – and this is going to severely impact us. This is the busiest time of year. We are looking at a severe financial hit."

For people in Gironde, the prefecture with Bordeaux at its centre, the fires have torched the outlook for an industry that makes up 7pc of the regional economy.

"As a region, we rely on three things: wine, forestry and tourism. Wine is on the way down. Forests are being burnt. And tourism is being seriously hit," says Michael Baynes, co-owner of local real estate agency Maxwell-Baynes Christie's International.

Alongside the 220,000 residents who have been evacuated to temporary shelters, the Bordeaux Gironde Chamber of Commerce and Industry says 14,500 local businesses are unable to operate normally.

"This is also an economic thunderbolt, hitting a region that did not need it," Roland Lescure, France's finance minister, said on Monday.

Economists and policymakers are trying to gauge the wider impact of what Emmanuel Macron, the French president, has called France's worst crisis since the Second World War.

"Gironde's globally significant wine industry, agri-food production and logistics networks mean that local disruption can quickly ripple through supply chains and exports," says Daniel Parker, of Oxford Economics.

Wildfires are costly to fight, and wreak immediate damage. And it's not just France: Spain is also battling some of its most destructive fires this decade, with 77,000 hectares burned and tens of thousands of people evacuated.

Spain's firefighting effort is estimated to cost between €10,000 (£8,000) and €19,000 per hectare, putting the total into the billions.

In France, 200 homes have been destroyed, and 70 campsites have shut. The fires are closing in on the region's heavy industry, which ominously includes missile and rocket factories.

Even if the sites are secure, the likes of missile manufacturer Ariane, aircraft maker Airbus and Dassault and the engine maker Safran face potential interruptions to production.

These big hitters will probably get back to normal quickly. But a Banque de France study found that the fallout from major floods could be similarly disruptive. Small businesses suffered 8pc lower turnover for up to five years afterwards, and many chose to relocate to safer areas. Beyond the immediate economic impact lies the potentially substantial cost of reconstruction and reforestation. And then there's the investment that both Spain and France will have to make to ensure that they are better prepared when, inevitably, Europe's changing climate brings them more of the same.

A man and his dog, top, watch fire on a mountain in Onda, Spain, while a water-bombing helicopter, above, takes water from a private pool in Casillas, Spain.

This potentially hefty bill comes at a time when Spain is only just repairing its public finances after the eurozone crisis of the early 2010s, and as France remains mired in a seemingly unfixable budget black hole. "The problem for France is that when your public deficit is at 5pc of GDP, you have no room to increase the deficit," says Hadrien Camatte, of the French investment bank Natixis.

"If you are going to help the place to rebuild, you will need to make spending cuts on other areas."

Gironde may need the support. Even before the fires, the region was reeling. French wine exports last year dropped to their lowest volume this century. There are plans to tear up 30,000 hectares of Bordeaux vineyards, almost a third of the total.

"Bordeaux is going through a very big change at the moment, and this fire seems to be another layer of horror on top of what is already awful," says Baynes.

The estate agent is dealing with clients who have called to cancel their beachfront holiday bookings, and is offering them alternative sites.

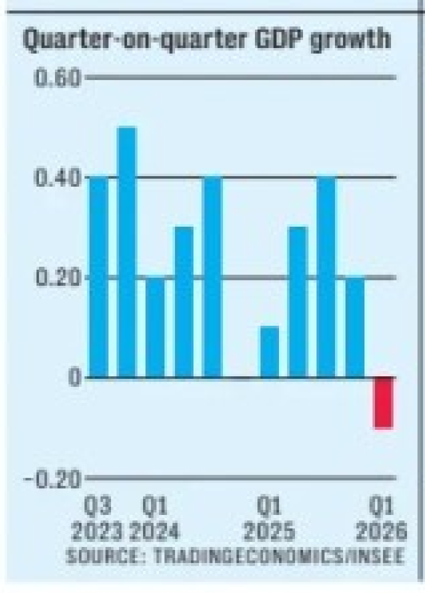
The authorities are at loggerheads over what to do with the tourists. Sophie Brocas, the prefect of the French department of Gironde, asked people not to come. Her warning has prompted Airbnb to allow refunds for cancelled bookings.

But Nathalie Delattre, a regional senator, said large areas of Gironde were unaffected and still viable for holidays. And Serge Papin, the commerce minister, urged would-be visitors to come and help the region recover. "I am hopeful that by August we will be able to reopen the evacuated areas," he told French television. "One way to show solidarity with these areas is to say to yourself, 'Come on, let's go.'"

The French and Spanish governments are marshalling their resources to grapple with the fallout. Macron's administration has strong-armed insurers into offering generous terms. They will also ease access to benefits for furloughed workers, and are fielding business demands for respite from taxes and social security contributions.

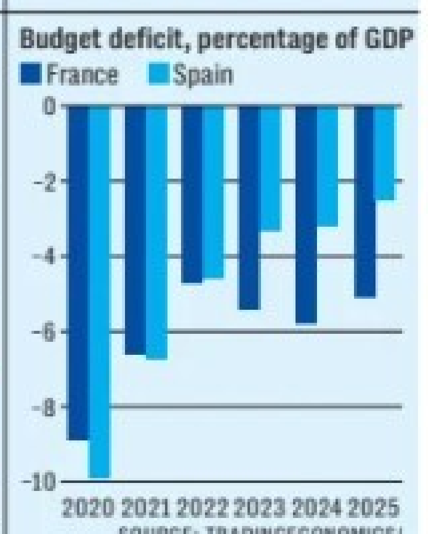
'This area relies on tourists. We are looking at a severe financial hit'

France's economy is already in the doldrums



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS/INSEE

No room for more spending



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS/INSEE/BANK OF SPAIN

Police, health workers, military staff and medical equipment are being funnelled into the region, along with as much firefighting resource as the authorities can lay hands on.

But it's the longer-term bill that will really punish the already stretched French budget. Some estimates put the reforestation cost at up to €300m. That's before increased deployment of prevention measures such as fire breaks, and the potential replacement of combustible tree species.

Politicians in France and Spain are under pressure to get more serious about preparedness. "If there is a criticism that I'm hearing across the region, it's that we probably need to invest in more of the aircraft that can dump the fire retardants," says Baynes. "We need to be ready to jump on these events across Europe with an army of people who are well trained."

But before the Spanish and French governments tackle all that, they have to put out the fires. French fire chiefs say this could take "weeks, or even months".

The economic aftershocks could last even longer.

Johnson & Johnson offers £4bn to settle baby powder cancer claims

By **Chris Price**

JOHNSON & JOHNSON (J&J) has agreed to pay an estimated $5.5bn (£4.1bn) to resolve tens of thousands of US claims that its baby powder caused ovarian cancer.

The pharmaceutical giant's offer of a settlement could end a decade-long legal battle that has dogged the company. Erik Haas, the vice-president of litigation at J&J, said the claims that its talcum powder products caused cancer were "meritless" but added the company was willing to settle to get closure.

The settlement covers around 76,000 claims and must be accepted by 95pc of the ovarian cancer claimants in US state or federal court before it becomes final.

J&J previously settled the majority of cases alleging that its talc contained asbestos and caused mesothelioma, a rare but aggressive cancer affecting the lungs, abdomen or heart. Mr Haas said: "While we are confident the company would have ultimately prevailed with further litigation, as it has in the vast majority of cases tried to date, this resolution allows the company to put this matter behind it and remain focused on its mission to develop medicines and devices that save lives."

J&J expects to pay $3bn in 2027 and it will make further payments in 2028.

More than 3,000 people filed lawsuits at Britain's High Court last year alleging that either they or a family member developed ovarian cancer or mesothelioma as a result of using Johnson's baby powder between 1965 and 2023. The settlements announced on Monday included groups who filed claims in US federal and state courts.

75,000

US claims that the settlement covers. More than 3,000 people also filed lawsuits at Britain's High Court last year

J&J ended global sales of baby powder containing the mineral talc in 2023, switching to a formulation based on corn starch.

The settlements come after cases were put on hold for more than three years after a series of bankruptcy filings by J&J.

It filed three bankruptcies through a shell-company subsidiary in an effort to settle the cases. Each bankruptcy ended in dismissal and the litigation resumed in March 2025.

Chris Seeger, a US lawyer who represents about 2,500 clients with talc claims and helped negotiate the agreement, said J&J could ultimately pay $7bn or more.

The settlement assigns specific values to qualifying ovarian cancer claims but does not cap J&J's total payout. He said: "We got a fair settlement and our clients are going to be happy with it."

Ocado backs down from £190m fight with M&S after their joint venture misses targets

By **Melissa Lawford**

OCADO has abandoned an attempt to force Marks & Spencer to hand over a £190m payment tied to the companies' online grocery joint venture.

M&S is not expected to make a payment after the pair's £750m Ocado Retail partnership failed to meet targets originally laid out in 2019.

Ocado had raised the prospect of legal action against M&S, warning last year that it would use "all available means" to fight for the cash.

Under the terms of the joint venture, which allowed M&S to sell food online for the first time, the high-street retailer was due to pay Ocado a final instalment of £190.7m.

However, this was dependent on Ocado Retail meeting undisclosed performance targets in the year to November 2023, which it failed to do.

Tim Steiner, Ocado's chief executive, had argued that factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic should have been taken into account under the terms of the deal, meaning the sum should still be paid.

According to *The Times*, the two parties have decided to draw a line under the dispute, resulting in no cash being paid.

However, in a fresh stand-off, M&S has reportedly refused to commit to building new warehouses or increasing volumes at its existing sites unless Ocado agrees to improved commercial terms.

'Ocado continues to be the UK's fastest-growing grocer and is now profitable across all key measures'

Earlier this month, Ocado reported a £33m loss after tax in the first half of this year, down from a £605m profit in the same period last year, following drops in revenues in its technology and robotics division.

Its retail joint venture reported close to £1.8bn in sales in the first six months of 2026, a 15pc increase on the previous year.

The results came just days after Mr Steiner, who co-founded the business with two former Goldman Sachs colleagues 26 years ago, confirmed he would step down in 2028, after a reported plot to remove him.

Ocado's share price has slumped by more than a fifth so far this year. M&S, by contrast, is up by more than 19pc.

An Ocado spokesman said: "Ocado Retail continues to be the UK's fastest-growing grocer, and we were pleased to announce in last week's half-year results that the business is now profitable across all key measures.

"We expect to build further on this momentum in the coming months by expanding order capacity for customers while maintaining strong growth.

"Together with our joint venture partners at M&S, we remain focused on realising the significant potential of the Ocado Retail business."

A M&S spokesman said: "We have a good relationship with Ocado.

"As you would expect, we are in regular discussion, working together to realise the full potential of our partnership. These discussions are positive."

Nvidia invests $5bn in start-up founded by executive who plotted OpenAI coup

By **Tom Haynes**

NVIDIA has agreed to invest $5bn (£4bn) in a secretive artificial intelligence (AI) start-up founded by a former OpenAI executive who led a boardroom coup against Sam Altman.

The chipmaker is backing Safe Superintelligence (SSI), an AI business founded by Ilya Sutskever, after his dramatic split from the ChatGPT developer. Mr Sutskever, an OpenAI co-founder and its former chief scientist, played a central role in firing Mr Altman, its chief executive, in November 2023 over claims he had not been "consistently candid" with its board.

However, Mr Altman was reinstated within days after hundreds of staff threatened to quit and investors rallied behind him.

Mr Sutskever ultimately reversed his stance on Mr Altman's sacking and called for him to return. He left OpenAI six months later to launch SSI, which has so far remained highly secret.

Despite securing a $32bn valuation for SSI from top Silicon Valley investors just months after his departure, Mr Sutskever has revealed little about the technology it is developing. His new start-up has yet to release a product or publish research, saying instead that it is focused on developing safer AI systems before bringing them to market.

Its latest deal will also give SSI access to Nvidia's most advanced AI chips, allowing it to increase its computing power tenfold over the next year. Financial terms were not disclosed, although sources told *The Wall Street Journal* that Nvidia had committed about $5bn.

Ilya Sutskever, an ex-chief scientist at OpenAI who played a central role in firing Sam Altman, has founded Safe Superintelligence

Nvidia is also a major investor in OpenAI, having committed $30bn to the lab earlier this year.

Before his split with OpenAI, Mr Sutskever was one of the company's most influential researchers and helped develop the technology behind ChatGPT. He has argued that simply throwing more computing power and data at AI systems may no longer deliver the same leaps in performance, suggesting his company is taking a different approach. Mr Sutskever said: "We have research that is worthy of scaling up, and having access to a big Nvidia computer will let us do so."

Jensen Huang, Nvidia's chief executive, said: "We are excited to see what new breakthroughs SSI will discover."

The investment is the latest sign that Nvidia is using its financial firepower as well as its chips to strengthen its position in the AI race. The company has invested billions across several start-ups that also rely on its hardware.

It also emerged on Monday that Nvidia is in talks to provide a financing guarantee worth up to $250bn to help OpenAI lease computing capacity for a vast US data centre project in Ohio.

The growing number of deals between chipmakers and AI developers has prompted concerns about the circular nature of these transactions, with some chip giants increasingly investing in companies they also supply.

The worries fuelled a 5pc drop in Nvidia's shares on Monday.

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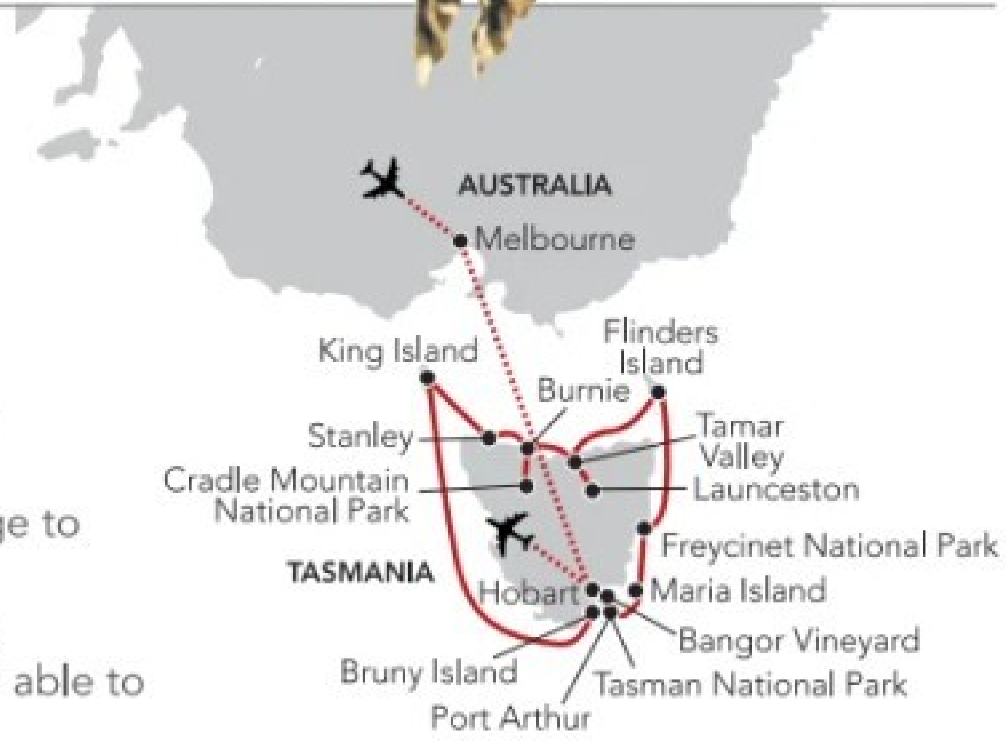
TIMELESS TASMANIA

A circumnavigation of Tasmania aboard the Coral Adventurer

24th February to 13th March 2028

Australia's island state is poised at the edge of the world, where the Southern and Pacific Oceans collide. Pristine World Heritage wilderness and national parks teem with native wildlife and Tasmania's natural beauty sees rugged mountain ranges culminate in soaring coastal cliffs and crescent shaped beaches. Amidst this stunning natural backdrop, Tasmania's intriguing history is displayed in compelling convict heritage and historic sites. In addition the fertile pastures and verdant valleys produce a bounty of world-renowned food and wine.

Such beauty and diversity is best explored by small ship and we have exclusively chartered the Coral Adventurer for this fascinating expedition which will circumnavigate Tasmania. The itinerary is brimming with highlights and includes a wonderful balance of history, culture, flora, fauna and architecture. We have planned our unique voyage to include seldom visited World Heritage Sites and pristine wilderness areas of Tasmania, a place renowned for its amazing diversity. With the Coral Adventurer we can drop anchor in remote bays, navigate channels and call into harbours both large and small and with the unique Xplorer tender vessels and the Zodiac landing craft we will be able to land in otherwise inaccessible places, making the most of Tasmania's extraordinary natural attractions.



THE ITINERARY IN BRIEF

Days 1 & 2 London or Manchester to Melbourne, Australia. Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 3 Melbourne. Arrive this morning and transfer to our central hotel for a two night stay.

Day 4 Melbourne. After breakfast in the hotel you can choose to take a morning city tour or join a tour to the Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley.

Day 5 Melbourne to Hobart. This morning we transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to Hobart. On arrival we will transfer to the Coral Adventurer and embark.

Day 6 Maria Island. Arrive this morning at Maria Island National Park which is perhaps best known as the site of Tasmania's second penal settlement which opened in 1821. Today the only reminder is the remains of the penal settlement in Darlington, however Maria Island is also home to diverse flora and fauna including reintroduced animals such as forester kangaroos, Bennetts wallabies, Tasmanian native hens and Cape Barren geese that had been wiped out during the European occupation. The very things that made the island a convict settlement now make it an ideal refuge for plant and animal species that are under threat elsewhere. Join a nature walk, stroll amongst the ruins and beautifully restored buildings of the Darlington convict settlement or take a walk to the striking formations of the Painted Cliffs.

Day 7 Freycinet Peninsula. This morning we will explore the Freycinet National Park. The majestic beauty of Freycinet's granite mountains and white, sandy beaches fringed by eucalypts have long been admired by naturalists, artists and writers and the area was reserved as a National Park in 1916. From our anchorage we will land at Hazards Beach from where we can see the stunning red and pink granite peaks. From here we take the track across the iconic Wineglass Bay where there will be the chance to swim.

Day 8 Flinders Island. Awake this morning off wild and rugged Flinders Island, one of the 52 islands in the Furneaux Group. Here we find a combination of white sandy beaches, the pink and gray granite mountain ranges of Strzelecki National Park and a landscape of lagoons and wetlands. We will land on the picturesque Trousers Point beach, the starting point for one of 'Tasmania's Great Short Walks',as we follow the coastal track to Fotheringate Beach with its fascinating granite caves and rock formations. Meanwhile, as we explore the island we learn of the sombre history of the Wybalenna Settlement. It was to here that Aboriginal people from the Tasmanian mainland were exiled in the 1830s and 1840s. Also, see relics of Flinders maritime past at the Furneaux Museum and pass by the seaside villages.

Day 9 Launceston & Tamar Valley. Launceston has one of the best preserved early cityscapes in Australia with its elegant colonial and Victorian architecture and century-old parks. On a full day tour we have the morning to enjoy some sightseeing around the city taking in the architecture of the historical buildings and the gardens that lace the streets. Also see the magnificent Cataract Gorge and learn about the fascinating collection of history, fauna and people of this region. We will return to the ship via one of the vineyards of the Tamar Valley and enjoy a tasting.

Day 10 Burnie. Continuing our journey along the north coast we arrive at Burnie. Settled as an industrial port by the Van Diemans Land company in the early 19th century it was a centre for the timber industry. Today the town retains a number of artisans producing delicious foods, hand-made paper and single malt whiskey. You can join a morning tour to the nearby Emu Valley Rhododendron Gardens and Fern Glade Nature Reserve. Alternatively join a full day tour to Cradle Mountain National Park, part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and one of the island's iconic sites. Here we find rich vegetation with many endemic plants and trees offering a rich habitat for wildlife including Tasmanian devils. We will have time to walk at Dove Lake to see the wonderful views of Cradle Mountain.

Day 11 Stanley. Overnight we sail the short distance to Stanley. This is a town of well-preserved colonial buildings sheltering in the shadow of 'the Nut', an imposing volcanic plug which rises 150 metres above the town. You can either take the steep walking path or a more leisurely chairlift ride to the top to enjoy the views. Afterwards we will learn more about the region's history on a town tour including Highfield House, where European settlers first established themselves in Tasmania. Built in 1834 the estate is a rare example of residential architecture and graceful design from the Regency period. Alternatively drive to the Tarkine Wilderness a 447,000 hectare area which includes Australia's largest patch of temperate rainforest as well as sand dunes, mountain ranges, moorland, wild rivers, caves and coastal heathland.

Day 12 King Island. Located in the Bass Strait which separates Tasmania with Victoria lies King Island, a peaceful paradise with rugged coastlines, beautiful beaches and wonderful nature walks. King Island's largest town is Currie which is set on a scenic harbour with amazing views of the vast Southern Ocean. During our tour we will see the Currie Lighthouse and the calcified forest which is made up of hundreds of weirdly shaped limestone features.

Day 13 At Sea. Spend a leisurely day at sea as we cruise along the west coast of Tasmania.

Day 14 Bruny Island. Arrive this morning off the southern Tasmania coast at Adventure Bay which is on the east coast of Bruny Island. Here, those feeling active have the option to join a strenuous walk along the dramatic coastal cliffs of Fluted Cape where we hope to see Bennett's Wallabies. If weather permits, we will cruise the base of these near-vertical dolerite cliffs using the Xplorer tender vessels or Zodiacs.

Day 15 Tasman National Park & Bangor Vineyard. The Tasman Peninsula is known for its fascinating geological formations and the soaring 300 metre high dolerite sea cliffs of Cape Raoul, Cape Pillar and Cape Hauy. Watch fur seals hauling out on the rocks, as well as playful dolphins feeding and magnificent albatross soaring amongst the updrafts created by the sea cliffs. This afternoon we will drive to the Bangor Vineyard where we will learn about the cultivation of the wines and the history of the property before enjoying a tasting.

Day 16 Port Arthur. Port Arthur started as a timber station in 1830 but it is best known for being a penal colony. From 1833, until 1877, it was the destination for the hardest of convicted British and Irish criminals. Today, the Historic Site has over 30 buildings, ruins and restored period homes set in 100 acres of landscaped grounds which we will discover with Port Arthur's knowledgeable guides. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure.

Day 17 Hobart. Tasmania's capital was founded in 1804 as a penal colony but today Hobart is a cosmopolitan city. After we disembark this morning, you can choose to learn more about the history of the city on a guided tour. Alternatively take a journey to the summit of Mount Wellington for wonderful views over the city returning via the Royal Botanical Gardens. After lunch in a local restaurant we will transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay and the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Day 18 Hobart to London or Manchester. Check out this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London or Manchester.

Day 19 London or Manchester. Arrive this morning.

CORAL ADVENTURER was purpose built in 2019 to explore the remote and tropical regions of Australasia. The atmosphere on board is relaxed and informal with the focus being on exploration and the excellent Australian crew are dedicated to providing attentive hospitality. All cabins are outside facing with ensuite bathroom, premium amenities, wardrobe, desk, armchair and many feature a private balcony. The spacious public areas are light and airy with large picture windows to take in the surrounding vistas. There is a comfortable lounge to relax with a good book, attend lectures and presentations. The elegant Dining Room features indoor and outdoor seating and operates an open seating arrangement. A much-loved aspect of the onboard experience is the open bridge policy which allows you to spend time with the Captain and Officers learning about all aspects of navigation and trip planning. Outside there is over 1000 square metres of open deck space with a wrap-around promenade deck providing panoramic views.

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Hosepipe bans are the least of our water worries

PHILIP JOHNSTON

Britain has a chronic issue with its supply and infrastructure – repairing leaks would just be the start

THE LAWN looks like the Gobi Desert, our pond has become a puddle and the paddling pool for the grandchildren lies empty and forlorn. Like millions of others we have a hosepipe ban, which seems hardly surprising given the length of the dry spell we are enduring, in the South at least.

Yet, for the past two weeks, enough water to fill a dozen Olympic-sized swimming pools has been pouring out of a burst pipe and into the drains on a nearby road. The leak created a sink hole that has been marked for the past fortnight by a single bollard. Only on Monday did a team arrive to fix it.

Why are we so cavalier about water usage and waste? Thames Water, which is on the verge of bankruptcy, is a particular culprit in this regard. The company's annual report admits to losing millions of gallons of water a day due to leaks which if fixed might allow me to water my garden.

A drought has officially been declared in parts of the country with some areas seeing no rain for a month or more. Rivers have been reduced to a trickle and lakes to patches of mud. Flora and fauna alike are suffering.

Yet we don't care that much because we know it will always rain, won't it? Indeed, most of Britain north of Manchester will probably wonder what all the fuss is about as they have had a more temperate summer.

But the South and South East, where the bulk of the population lives, is relatively dry at the best of times. It may surprise denizens to learn that rainfall levels in London and the Home Counties are among the lowest in Europe.

In some years, the annual total in Essex is even below that of Jerusalem though as our rain normally falls throughout the year rather than in monsoon-like deluges, the reservoirs and aquifers are routinely replenished and the water retained.

However, the past few years have seen longer dry periods. Some areas last year had their driest winter in almost a century leading to drought conditions. We have seen the same again this summer with the longest run of dry days since 1995, combined with exceptionally hot temperatures.

England has received only 5pc of its long-term average July rainfall, with the South and East seeing no rain at all. Wisley in Surrey has seen 33 consecutive dry days. Even Wales, which is notorious for its wet weather and where the joke is that everyone owns a kagoule, has seen just 5pc of its usual July rainfall. On the other hand, we had a very wet autumn and winter which helped to recharge the reservoirs and aquifers and fill up the rivers.

Here, then is the nub of the problem – an assumption that enough rain will eventually fall to render difficult decisions about potentially expensive infrastructure unnecessary. But it cannot be ducked any more, not just because the climate may be changing but principally because of the growth in population in the very areas where rainfall is lowest.

Demand is growing while supply is not keeping up. Even in a normal rainfall year this would be problematic. In a drought, a crisis looms. The answer is to ensure supplies are topped up and retained but we have become very bad at doing so. It is more than 30 years since the last major reservoir was opened in England at Carsington in Derbyshire. There has been a 20-year-row over whether to open another reservoir in the Thames basin near Abingdon to supply water for London. Work is scheduled to start in 2029, but planning objections continue.

> 'Why are we so cavalier about water usage and waste? Thames Water is a particular culprit'

A recent House of Lords report said England is on course for a public water supply deficit of five billion litres a day by 2055: "Without substantial mitigation and a renewed focus on a coordinated whole-of-society approach to drought, England may find itself running out of our most precious resource – water." How can it be possible for an island nation smack in the path of a relentless procession of low-pressure areas to run out of its most precious commodity? The Government has belatedly woken up to the urgency after experts warned that within 20 years there will be a monumental crisis. Last year, it published an ambitious set of proposals for 10 new reservoirs, nine desalination projects, seven large-scale recycling schemes and inter-regional water transfers using canals and rivers to establish a rudimentary grid of the sort first proposed in 1943 by the engineer JF Pownall.

He produced plans for a canal running down the spine of England at the 310ft contour and connecting the most populated towns and cities. Needless to say it never got built.

The latest wheeze is to tap the vast reservoirs in Wales and transfer the water from the Severn to the Thames through a pipeline or aqueduct linking the two rivers. Yet given that there has been just one reservoir built in 30 years, the latest watery wish-list represents another triumph of hope over expectation. To override local opposition, Ministers want to use new planning powers to designate some reservoirs as critical national infrastructure projects.

Two – in the Fens and in Lincolnshire – are subject to consultation but the only one actually under construction is the Havant Thicket Reservoir in Hampshire. As to desalination plants, useful in a country surrounded by sea, we have just one, at Beckton in east London, a £250m white elephant that has effectively been mothballed despite the drought.

Moreover, this entire package will have to be delivered by private water companies most of which are in debt. The idea they can be renationalised and the billions needed provided by the taxpayer is for the birds.

The past few decades have seen the population grow by millions and successive governments have promised to build more housing to cope with demand. Andy Burnham has reappointed Angela Rayner to oversee her plan for 1.5 million new homes and he has spoken of the biggest council-house building programme since the war. Before blurting out unrealistic targets, do our political leaders ever wonder where the infrastructure to sustain them will come from? It is madness to keep building houses if the water is running out. Repairing leaks more speedily is imperative, but it is the absolute minimum we need to see happen in the coming years.

Well trained
Two Harris's hawks used for the control of pigeons on London buildings travel between jobs on the Underground's Bakerloo line.

DAVID PARRY/SHUTTERSTOCK

Burnham should learn the lesson from Scotland: High taxes can cut revenues as well as increase them

GERARD LYONS

We change our behaviour to avoid paying out more, as our new Prime Minister may soon find to his cost

THE SCOTTISH Government has been given a timely lesson that incentives matter. Last week it emerged that increasing the top rate of income tax in the country to 48p had resulted in lower revenues.

It appears that some Scottish taxpayers altered their behaviour, taking more income as dividends, increasing pension contributions on which they received tax relief at the new, higher rate, or simply changing how they worked.

Although there are multiple influences at play, behavioural response appeared significant.

This should be borne in mind when considering the current crop of tax proposals being discussed in Westminster and often leaked in the media. Any tax proposal should take account of likely behavioural change. Perhaps not surprisingly, this has focused attention on Arthur Laffer, the economist.

He showed that the relationship between tax rates and revenues is not linear.

His Laffer curve illustrated that, beyond a certain point, raising tax rates could reduce tax revenues as behaviour changed.

This does not mean that the Laffer curve can be the basis for tax policy, as there are many influences at play.

Also, it is not always possible to identify where that revenue-maximising point is. But Laffer captured an important point that higher tax rates impact incentives and actions.

As public spending rises, these issues should be central to the policy debate currently under way as Andy Burnham, the Prime Minister, gets under way. For instance, it is a lesson that should inform future decisions about capital gains tax (CGT).

The Government was elected on a manifesto that ruled out increases in income tax, National Insurance and VAT.

This has fed speculation that CGT will be raised to help fund the budget deficit. Yet the Treasury and the Office for Budget Responsibility have long recognised that CGT is particularly sensitive to behavioural responses.

> 'CGT is sensitive to behavioural responses. People can delay selling assets, alter timings of transactions'

People can delay selling assets, alter the timing of transactions, change how they are remunerated or engage in legitimate tax planning.

Recent receipts provide a reminder that higher rates do not necessarily generate higher revenues. This should be part of the debate about what happens to this tax in the Budget.

For each of the last two years, the economy has slowed before the Budget as speculation over possible tax rises has intensified. Instead of keeping policy discussions private until decisions have been taken, ideas are increasingly floated through selective leaks, perhaps in the hope of influencing the debate.

Investment, spending and confidence suffered.

Based on the last week, which saw a flurry of tax plans emerge, a repeat is possible this autumn.

There comes a point when a return to pre-Budget purdah is not only sensible but economically desirable.

The underlying problem is that public spending is too high, about 45pc of national income, and rising. Until this is brought back under control, speculation about higher taxes will persist.

A key point is that to fund spending on this scale, taxes need to come from recurring flows.

Modern tax systems evolved for a reason, around people's ability to pay, taxing income, wages, profits and spending rather than the paper value of assets. Once that principle is abandoned, the link between tax and ability to pay weakens.

Which brings us to housing.

On Monday, the Prime Minister wisely ruled out immediate changes to stamp duty.

Had he suggested otherwise, housing transactions, already subdued, could have slowed even further as buyers and sellers waited to see what was coming next.

Abolishing stamp duty would be welcome, as it discourages turnover and is economically damaging.

Despite the PM's remarks, an active debate has begun about housing taxation. Politics, not economics, may prevent a simpler, more efficient system.

The UK taxes property heavily and has a habit of adding new taxes rather than reforming existing ones. A new mansion tax is due in 2028.

> 'A new property tax would be hard for many to pay and would deter from doing up their home'

Introducing either a new land value tax or an annual property tax would create a different set of problems.

One of which is that the initial level of either tax might be set to create the illusion of more winners than losers. Then in time, taxes would probably rise from those initial levels.

A land value tax is levied on the underlying land, not the buildings sitting on it. Valuing that land would be difficult and also would not address the question of the person's ability to pay.

A new property tax would also be hard for many to pay and would deter people from doing up their home.

The economic consequences would be damaging. Builders, decorators and many other trades would suffer.

The likely political approach will be to tax both land and dwellings, compounding the problem.

This helps explain why, whenever wholesale reform of property tax has been examined, the practical answer has been incremental reform through council tax bands.

Modern tax systems evolved around incentives and people's ability to pay. Those principles incentivise behaviour and this should not be forgotten as the debate on taxes intensifies before an autumn Budget.

As the Scottish Government has discovered, raising new tax revenues is rarely straightforward.

Gerard Lyons is chief economist at Netwealth

GSK plots £400m research hub in push for cancer breakthrough

By **Emma Taggart**

GLAXOSMITHKLINE (GSK) will invest £400m in a major new science hub in Cambridge as part of plans to pour more money into developing new cancer drugs.

The pharmaceuticals giant said it planned to acquire a new 300,000 sq ft site on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, which will house most of its research and development (R&D). The new centre of excellence will employ more than 1,000 scientists, GSK said, with its researchers developing new vaccines, HIV treatments and cancer drugs.

However, the move will also end the FTSE 100 company's 50-year relationship with Stevenage, Herts, which was previously its main UK research base. Some Stevenage staff will be asked to relocate to another lab in nearby Ware. The investment in Cambridge comes as GSK seeks to ramp up its pipeline of medicines under Luke Miels, its new chief executive, who took on the role from Dame Emma Walmsley this year.

The company has been accelerating investment in cancer drugs after it acquired US-based Nuvalent in June for nearly £8bn GSK won approval from US medical regulators last week for Jideytro, a lung cancer treatment secured as part of the Nuvalen takeover.

The decision to open a new Cambridge campus will bolster the Government's efforts to turn the 100-mile corridor between Oxford and Cambridge into an economic powerhouse.

GSK said the investment would build its presence "in the heart of the UK's life sciences 'Golden Triangle'" – made up of Oxford, Cambridge and London.

Earlier this year, Rachel Reeves, the former chancellor, set out Labour's ambition to turn the area into a hub for science businesses, building new homes and transport links to create Europe's "Silicon Valley".

The Cambridge Biomedical Campus already employs more than 22,000 people and hosts treatments for one million patients each year. GSK hopes to build its links with research hospitals in Cambridge and benefit from proximity to the University of Cambridge. Mr Miels said: "This investment will accelerate our R&D and help us deliver new, competitive products."

On Tuesday, GSK also announced plans for a major cost-cutting drive aimed at saving £1.9bn by 2029 to fund the development of new drugs. The savings are expected to include job cuts around the world, including reducing some back-office roles.

Markets

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Government securities

52 week High	Low (£)	Stock	Price (£)	+/-	Flat Yield	Rdm Yield
107.53	103.38	Treas 6% 28	103.87	+0.05	5.78	4.25
102.33	97.08	Treas 4¼% 32	98.39	+0.15	4.32	4.57
99.39	92.65	Treas 4¼% 36	94.47	+0.21	4.50	4.98
102.00	93.84	Treas 4¾% 38	95.94	+0.25	4.95	5.20

Index Linked Securities

52 week High	Low (£)	Stock	Price (£)	+/-	Flat Yield	Rdm Yield
349.35	338.41	Treas 4⅛% IL 30	340.73	-0.26	1.21	0.95
248.27	236.46	Treas 2% IL 35	240.54	-0.22	0.83	1.75

10-year Government Bonds

	Yield%	Spread Vs Bunds	Spread Vs T-Bonds
France	3.78	+0.68	-0.81
Germany	3.10	-	-1.49
Japan	2.76	-0.34	-1.83
Great Britain	4.94	+1.84	+0.35
United States	4.59	+1.49	-

The share prices, price-earnings ratios and dividend yields below are supplied by Interactive Data (Europe) Ltd. The yields are calculated using historic dividend payments divided by the closing share price multiplied by 100.

Aerospace & defence +0.78%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
1527	902½	**Babcock Intl**	1160	+35½	0.6	27.6
2360	1529	**BAE Systems**	2025	+25	1.8	29.4
551½	398½	QinetiQ •	501½*	+10½	2.2	25.0
1532½	970½	**Rolls-Royce**	1409½	+5½	0.7	28.4
318½	161	Senior •	290½	–	1.0	-284.8

Banks -1.11%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
554½	352½	**Barclays**	505	-25½	2.3	11.5
563½	318½	Close Bros •	430	+3½	–	-6.4
1590	908½	**HSBC**	1548½	-2½	3.6	17.0
116	74½	**Lloyds Bk Gp**	113	-1½	3.2	16.1
705½	500½	**NatWest Group**	664½	-16	4.9	12.4
1080	613	Santander	1040	-2	1.6	13.4
2278	1285	**Standard Ch**	2097	-39	2.2	14.3

Beverages +5.09%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
2142	1295½	**Diageo**	1672	+81	3.8	21.0

Chemicals +5.61%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
3312	2426½	**Croda Intl**	3160	+235	3.5	71.2
2434	1730½	Johnson Mat •	1959*	+54	3.9	-34.2
796	505	Victrex •	796	+31	7.5	24.9

Construction -0.09%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
900	519	Balfour Beatty •	858	-9	1.6	16.3
410½	235½	**Barratt Redrow**	294½	+1½	5.8	21.7
4442	2796	Berkeley Grp •	3478	+22	–	10.5
237	133½	Boot H	152	-4	5.2	8.6
220½	124½	Costain •	211½	-2½	2.0	15.2
1009½	788½	Grafton Gp •	973½	+21½	3.8	13.9
5730	3915	Morgan Sindall •	4334	-120	3.8	11.6
1592	947½	**Persimmon**	1109½	-3	5.4	12.4
116½	74½	Taylor Wimpey •	84½	+½	9.0	30.1

Electricals -1.15%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
510	171	Dialight	500	+9	–	–
800	505	discoverIE Grp •	792*	+31	1.6	26.2
4902	3191½	**Halma**	3530*	-42	0.7	35.8
5490	2860	Renishaw •	5065	-100	1.5	44.0
2060	805½	XP Power •	1602	-58	–	-38.1

Electricity -0.62%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
937½	613½	Drax Group •	749½	-15	3.9	36.2
1428½	1000	**Nat Grid**	1218	-4½	4.0	18.6
2767½	1587	**SSE**	2352*	-25	2.9	22.3

Engineering / Industrial -0.06%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
98½	71	Coats Group •	84½	+7	3.0	19.0
414½	230	Cropper J	360	-10	–	11.7
28500	7220	Goodwin •	17160	-1520	1.6	52.4
3076	2138	**IMI**	2974	-6	1.1	23.9
1212½	660	Mondi •	782½	+29½	3.1	24.5
38½	21½	Severfield	36½	-1½	–	-3.1
2746½	2088	**Smiths Gp**	2646	-10	1.8	30.9
8050	5950	**Spirax Gp**	7000	+15	2.4	31.6
3580	2254	**Weir**	2524	-50	1.7	26.4

Food producers +6.58%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
2359	1729½	**Ass Brit Fds**	2056	+43	3.1	14.5
5195	3270	**Coca-Cola HBC**	5085	+167	2.0	23.0
5810	4775	Cranswick •	5400*	-30	2.1	18.3
862	447½	Hilton Food •	564	+13	6.2	6.4
138	87	REA Hldgs	109	-2	–	-207.1
5542½	3644	**Unilever**	4998	+371	2.4	13.5

Gas & Water +0.46%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
220½	153½	**Centrica**	155½	-4½	3.7	-103.5
606	439½	Pennon Gp •	470½*	+9½	6.2	24.3
3335	2381	**Severn Trent**	3060	+52	4.1	24.8
1497	1072	**Utd Utilities**	1385*	+19	3.9	16.1

General financial +0.88%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
276½	145½	Ashmore •	205½	-1	8.2	16.9
363½	212	Bridgepoint Grp •	320½	-12½	3.0	64.1
1880	1240	BrooksMacdonald	1400	-30	5.9	10.8
1956	1016	**IG Group**	1698	-15	3.6	11.7
2340	1426½	**ICG**	1930*	-8	4.5	11.6
690	499½	**Investec**	646½	-3½	6.0	8.4
72	48	IP Group •	64½	-1½	2.0	8.9
385	223	Liontrust	284*	-7	6.7	18.4
10290	6684	**Lon Stock Ex**	9150	+202	1.6	38.4
359½	247	**M&G**	352½	-2	5.8	28.0
327½	154½	Man Group •	306½	+6½	4.2	26.5
209	150½	Quilter •	195½	-½	3.2	22.0
2458½	1620	S & U	1950	–	5.9	10.0
599½	358½	**Schroders**	588½	-½	3.7	17.3
132	95½	Vanquis Banking Gp	115½	–	–	36.0

Healthcare +2.98%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
416½	274½	**Haleon**	380½	+10½	1.9	20.5
1441½	1050	**Smith & Nep**	1200	+38	2.4	22.1

Household goods +3.15%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
1376½	976	**Burberry**	1140	+54	–	–
170	106½	McBride	158½	–	1.9	8.1
110½	65½	PZ Cussons	108½	+1½	3.3	-78.4
6522½	3664	**Reckitt Benck**	5176	+150	4.1	11.1

Information technology +5.43%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
315	196	Aptitude Sftwre	196	–	2.8	26.8
1335	771½	**The Sage Grp**	939½	+49	2.4	24.9

Insurance +0.24%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
265	177½	**Aberdeen Group**	248½	-½	5.9	11.5
3784	2624	**Admiral**	3766	+176	5.4	15.3
700½	590½	**Aviva**	692½	+4½	5.7	25.7
1296	750	**Beazley**	1292½	-3½	1.9	11.4
1904	1246	**Hiscox**	1819	-27	2.1	13.4
700	549	Lancashire Hldg •	660	+10½	16.8	7.3
310	217½	**Legal & General**	297½	-½	7.3	29.8
1238	910½	**Prudential**	1076½	-13	1.8	9.3
921	615	**Standard Life**	917½	+4½	6.0	-194.8
1575½	1050	**St James's Place**	1085	–	1.7	10.9

Investment trusts +0.77%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	NAV
4497	1825	**3i**	2913	+111	2.9	3090
394½	325	3i Infrastructure •	385½	+1	3.5	403
822	606	Aberdeen New India	720	–	–	804
1356	1178	**Alliance Witan**	1346	+11	2.2	1402
764	439½	Allianz Tech Trust •	654	-12	–	723
331	260	Baillie Giff China	303½	-3½	0.8	335
116½	91½	Baillie Giff Euro Gwth	115½	+1½	0.6	127
153½	120½	Bankers Invstmt Tst •	147*	-½	1.9	161
1684	804	Biotech Growth	1642	-16	–	1760
284	197	BlckRckAminc	280	–	5.0	276
205	136½	BlackRockEnrgy&Res	173	-3	3.4	183
208	158½	BlckRock Frntrv	188½	-3½	4.0	189
625	507	BlckRck Grt Euro •	591	-3	1.2	637
238	198	BlckRck Inc&Grth	230*	-2	3.3	260
288½	230½	BlackRock Small •	270½	-2	2.9	309
1072½	542½	BlackRock Wld M •	876	–	2.7	899
1562	1336	Brunner •	1530	+24	1.8	1695
395	312	Caledonia •	385½*	+1½	2.0	594
592	486	City of Lon •	580*	+5	3.7	577
467	207	CQS Nat Res G & I	354*	-9	8.0	359
330	268½	CT Glbl Mgd G	320	–	–	326
135	114	CT Glbl Mgd I	130½	–	6.1	131
592	438½	CT Priv Eq Ord	500*	–	5.6	695
373	320	CT UK Cap & Inc	358½	+4	3.7	371
126	97	CT UKHighIncTst	114*	-½	5.2	118
480½	460	Dunedin Ent #	475	–	4.8	–
851	737½	Edinburgh Inv Tr •	851	+14	3.8	913
294½	185½	Edin Worldwide •	240	–	–	260
1332	325½	**F&C Inv Trust**	333½*	+½	1.3	367
672	546	Fidelity Asian V	584	-2	3.5	612
339	241	Fidlty Chna Sp Sits •	257*	-1½	3.5	276
442	367½	Fidelity Euro Tst •	426	+1	2.3	446
463	372	Fidelity Sp V •	461½	+3	2.2	460
939	706½	Finsbury Gwth •	818	+31	2.5	848
198½	162½	Glbl Small Co Trust •	193	–	1.6	204
211	173½	Hend High Inc	208	+2	5.3	215
966	769	Hend Smaller Co •	947	-3	3.0	1037
3290½	2285	Herald Inv •	2965	-15	–	3242
530	318½	HgCapital •	386	-1	1.3	530
138	107½	HICL Infrastructure •	135½	-½	6.3	161
1601½	1288½	ICG Enterprise Tst •	1404	+4	3.0	2034
972	782½	JPM Claverh'se •	962*	+4	3.8	980
153	125½	JPM Eur G&I •	145¼*	-1	3.7	147
849	633	JPM Japanese •	777	-16	1.1	838
710½	522½	**Land Secs**	707	+8	5.8	–
186½	141½	Lowland Inv	181½*	-½	3.7	200
282	234½	Mercantile InvTr •	280½*	+½	2.9	310
665	536	Merchants Tst •	663*	+4	4.5	695
1664	1322	Monks •	1586	+4	0.1	1669
1026	854½	Murray Income •	1020	+12	3.9	1089
370	283½	Murray Intl •	368½*	+3	3.4	364
57	47	Northern 2 VCT	52	–	5.8	55
86½	79½	Northern 3 VCT	81	–	5.6	85
60	53	Nthn Venture	55	–	5.6	58
437	345	Pacific Assets	401	-6	1.4	431
409	319½	Pantheon •	393½	+2½	–	518
2610	1906½	RIT Cap Ptnrs •	2460	+20	1.8	3159
319	281½	Ruffer Inv Pref •	293½	–	2.1	306
738	488½	Schroder Asian TR •	650	-19	1.8	687
559	480½	Scot American •	559	+8	2.9	593
1563	1015½	**Scot Mortgage**	1325½	-3½	0.3	1455
253	215½	STS Global Income	235	+6	3.6	234
352	196½	Templtn Em Mt •	298*	-8	1.8	323
364½	291	TR Property •	318½*	+2	5.1	349
150½	137	UIL Fin ZDP 2026	150	–	–	150
302	238½	Utilico Emerg •	284*	+1	3.4	316
398	306½	Worldw HealthTr •	389½	+1	0.6	411

Net Asset Values © 2026 Morningstar Estimated at previous day's close see www.Morningstar.co.uk.

Media +4.67%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
844½	408½	**Autotrader**	528½	+18	2.2	15.5
690	435	Bloomsbury •	630*	+14	2.6	19.0
1000	719	**Informa**	906	+18½	2.4	–
87½	65½	ITV •	75½	+1	6.6	12.8
1318	874½	**Pearson**	1310	+51	1.9	25.5
75½	40½	Reach	45½	+½	13.0	-1.1
3976	1991	**RELX**	2832	+150	2.4	25.2
827	391½	Rightmove •	474½	+17½	2.2	16.9
443½	218½	WPP •	318½	+24	4.7	6.3

Mining +0.01%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
4239	2042	**Anglo Amer**	3622	-19	0.5	-14.6
4475	1850½	**Antofagasta**	3561	+10	1.4	35.1
3495	1873½	BHP Group	3134	+23	3.3	23.4
81	81	Evraz #	81	–	–	0.5
4472	1371	**Fresnillo**	2563	+10	3.7	18.2
707½	275½	**Glencore**	506½	-12½	2.5	–
858	246½	Hochschild Mng •	444½	-1½	1.0	15.2
345	178½	Kenmare Res	188	-3	–	-0.7
9117	4344½	**Rio Tinto**	6865	+33	4.4	14.9

Oil & Gas -1.41%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
609½	397½	**BP**	525½	-8½	4.8	–
28	9½	EnQuest	23½	-1½	3.4	–
553	288½	Hunting •	448	-22	2.2	22.7
3758½	2553½	**Shell**	3234½	-42½	3.4	14.2

Pharmaceuticals +1.28%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
15732	9892	**AstraZeneca**	12940	+52	1.8	26.1
3228½	1943	Genus •	2218	-2	1.5	75.7
2282	1288½	**GSK**	2029	+68	3.4	14.4
2024	1187	Hikma •	1613	+36	3.9	11.8

Property +0.69%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
16	5½	Alina Hldgs	10	–	–	17
1208	800½	Big Yellow Gp •	890½	-9½	5.3	–
445½	318½	**Brit Land**	443½	+2½	5.2	–
2086	1469½	Derwent Ldn •	2060	+2	4.0	–
377	270	Gt Portland Est •	348	+1½	2.4	–
213	149½	Grainger •	176	-½	4.8	6.4
377	263½	Hammerson •	362½	-8	4.6	–
997½	603	**Segro**	997½	+15½	3.1	–
162½	124½	Shaftesbury Capital •	146	+2½	2.7	7.8
140	104	Town Centre	129	-2	3.9	–
175	132½	**Tritax Big Box**	173½	+½	4.8	18.3

Retailers +1.68%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
169½	106	Currys •	165	+1½	1.8	10.6
1249	707	Dunelm •	888	+11	7.9	11.5
819½	598	Frasers Group •	789	+19½	–	9.2
1856	1407½	Greggs •	1690	+55	4.1	14.1
245	123½	Halfords	241	+4	3.7	15.9
981	713	**Howden Joinery**	788	+17½	2.8	16.0
106½	64	**JD Sports Fash**	94½*	+2½	1.3	11.0
372½	260½	**Kingfisher**	311½	+7½	4.0	22.3
415½	301½	**Marks & Spen**	400	+8	1.1	31.5
4	¾	Mothercare	¾	–	–	0.8
15260	11200	**Next**	15240*	+195	1.8	20.1
397½	140½	Ocado •	188½	+3½	–	4.0
575	200	Pinewood Tech	435	+17	–	90.6
680	171½	Saga •	663	+4	–	–
370½	291½	**Sainsbury J**	353½	+4½	3.9	20.5
1120	378½	Smith WH •	446	+14	–	-4.0
510½	406½	**Tesco**	491½	+7½	3.0	17.9

Support services +2.77%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
2830	1981	**Bunzl**	2816	+48	2.6	20.0
416	215	Capita	254½	+13	–	-1.8
6740	4188	**DCC Energy**	6330	-10	3.4	–
114½	78½	Essentra	108½	+1½	1.9	–
4092½	2203	**Experian**	2981	+177	1.7	24.1
5845	3519½	**Intertek Group**	5835	–	2.8	26.8
250½	163½	Int'l Workplace •	202½	+1½	0.5	–
172½	123½	Johnson Serv •	152½	+½	3.1	16.4
214	134½	MITIE Gp •	208½*	-1½	2.2	31.5
507	342½	**Rentokil**	430½	+3½	2.1	30.8
325½	203	Serco Group •	243½	+1½	1.8	17.0
15½	6½	SIG	8½	-½	–	-1.5
723½	493½	Travis P •	567½	+13½	2.1	-6.8

Telecommunications +2.64%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
242½	173	**BT Group**	204½	+5½	4.1	18.6
1956	638	Telecom Plus •	859	+7	5.8	8.5
131½	80½	**Vodafone**	123½*	+3½	3.2	-87.4

Tobaccos +2.32%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
5326	3677	**Brit Am Tob**	4669*	+102	5.2	13.3
3632	2626	**Imp Brands**	2900	+82	5.7	11.5

Transport +1.98%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
490	294½	ZIGUP •	464	+9	5.8	13.8

Travel & Leisure +1.27%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
683½	332½	easyJet •	612	-8	2.2	9.3
1031½	500½	**Entain**	573½	-½	3.4	-5.5
240½	152½	FirstGroup •	180½*	-½	4.0	8.4
23610	6722	Flutter Entrtmt	8254	+166	–	-52.3
776	544	Fullers 'A'	736	-24	2.9	18.8
492½	332½	**IAG Intl Cons Air**	445½	+4½	1.5	7.3
13305	8458	**Intercont Hotels**	12122½	+172½	1.1	32.8
301½	223½	Mitchells&But •	275½	+9	–	9.3
40½	17	Mobico Group	27½	+1½	–	-0.5
447	210	Playtech •	396½	+6	–	1.0
166½	86	Rank Group •	101	+1½	2.9	10.6
790½	530½	Wetherspoon •	759	+27½	1.6	12.7
3302	2098	**Whitbread**	2516	+56	3.9	20.4

AIM -3.47%

52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
89½	36½	Afentra	59½	-2½	–	-56.6
1130	799	Arbuthnot	830	-10	6.6	7.6
244	125½	Central Asia Met	147½	-½	8.1	-4.6
872½	98	Ceres Power •	316½	-51	–	-12.9
470	271	Churchill China	390	–	5.4	9.8
380	194	CML Micro	275	–	4.0	-833.3
1550	881½	Cohort	1288	+8	1.4	24.7
177	101	Eleco	130½	–	0.9	81.6
14½	¼	Futura Medical	½	...	–	-0.1
162½	112	James Halstead	120½	–	7.4	12.4
405	200	Mpac Group	325	–	–	-10.2
1800	1100	MS Intl	1470	–	1.8	21.8
68	34½	Premier Miton	37½*	+½	8.0	48.1
74	43½	Tribal Gp	62	+1	2.1	14.8
1½	½	Xtract Resources	1	...	–	-4.3

The Alternative Investment Market is for young and growing companies. Shares may carry higher risks than those with a full quotation, and may be difficult to sell.

Americans +0.73%

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	+/-	GrsYd	Cvr
84½	28½	Alcoa $	44½	+½	0.9	9.8
387½	288½	Amer Express $	335½	+½	1.1	4.1
63	44½	BankAmerica $	62½	+½	2.1	3.2
254½	176½	Boeing $	222½	+11½	–	–
1073½	405½	Caterpillar $	837½	-35½	0.8	3.1
214½	146½	Chevron $	187½	-2½	3.8	0.8
110½	84½	Coca-Cola Euro $	111½	-2½	2.1	0.8
99½	74½	Colgate Palm $	93½	+1½	2.3	1.2
		ExxonMobil Hldgs $	152½	–	2.7	1.4
383	261½	Gen Electric $	361½	-½	0.5	4.5
426½	289½	Home Depot $	345	+9	2.7	1.5
		Honeywell $	248½	–	1.1	5.0
29½	17½	HP $	27½	+1½	4.3	2.3
332½	199½	IBM $	225½	+9½	3.0	1.7
142½	19	Intel $	86½	-5	–	–
56½	29½	Intl Paper $	44½	+1½	4.2	2.8
359	270½	JP Morgan Ch $	355½	-½	1.7	3.5
269½	164½	Johnson&John $	269	+3	2.0	1.6
36	24½	Keurig Dr Pep $	31	+½	3.0	1.7
55½	25½	Manpower $	55½	+2	2.6	0.2
345½	261	McDonalds $	273½	+2½	2.7	1.6
132½	76½	Merck $	131½	+1½	2.6	1.1
555½	349½	Microsoft $	398½	+9	0.9	4.6
28½	23½	Pfizer $	25½	+½	6.8	0.8
167½	137½	Procter & Gamble $	150½	-2½	2.9	1.6
220½	150½	Raytheon Tech $	217½	-½	1.3	2.0
497½	305½	Rockwell $	471½	+5½	1.2	1.8
505½	348	Trane Tech $	467½	-15½	0.9	3.1
135½	95½	Wal Mart Strs $	113½	+2	0.9	2.9
121½	92½	Walt Disney $	98½	+2	1.5	4.2
6½	1½	Xerox Hldgs $	2½	...	3.7	83.4

Europeans +0.48%

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	+/-	GrsYd	Cvr
67½	46½	AkzoNobel €	60½	+2½	3.3	2.3
97½	56½	BMW €	59½	+2	7.4	2.7
17½	12	Carrefour €	16	-½	7.4	1.6
77½	53½	Continental AG €	72½	+1½	3.7	0.3
62½	42½	Daimler €	46½	+1½	7.5	2.9
80½	60½	Danone €	72½	+1½	3.1	1.2
57½	37	Deutsche Post €	57½	+½	3.3	1.6
34½	23½	Deutsche Tele €	27½	+½	3.6	2.0
80½	63½	Heineken €	79½	+2½	2.4	2.5
654½	440	LVMH €	470½	+3½	2.8	1.7
82½	60½	LafargeHolcim SFr	74½	+½	2.3	1.9
10½	6½	Lufthansa €	9	+½	3.7	9.0
15	3½	Nokia OYJ €	7½	-½	1.8	0.9
35½	25½	Michelin €	34½	-½	4.0	1.7
107½	58½	Pernod Ricard €	67½	+3	6.9	1.4
27½	21½	Philips (Kon) €	22½	-1½	3.8	0.6
284½	198	Siemens €	271½	-1	2.0	2.0
79½	50½	Societe Gen €	77	-1½	2.1	4.2
10½	4½	Stellantis €	5½	+½	13.4	1.1
279½	212½	Thales €	249½	+5½	1.6	2.1
81½	49½	Total €	73½	-½	–	–
44½	28½	UBS AG SFr	42½	-½	2.0	2.3
37½	27½	Veolia Environ €	35½	-½	4.2	0.3
110½	71	Volkswagen €	75½	+2½	6.9	2.6

Recent issues

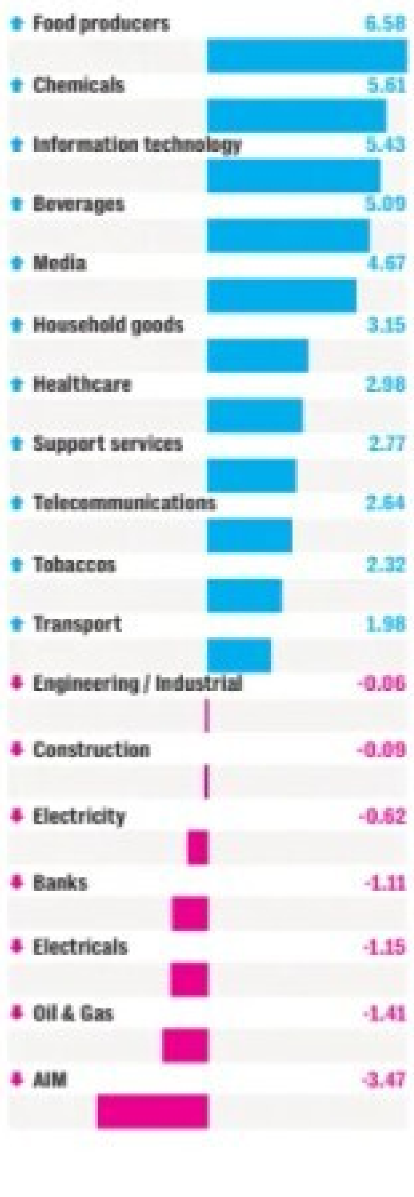
52 week High	Low (p)	Stock	Price (p)	+/-	Yld	P/E
		Bravura Solutions	134	–	–	–
300	125	Coastal Africa Group	200	–	–	–
5½	3½	Mendell Helium	4	-½	–	-1.2

Bold FTSE100 Stocks • FTSE250 Stocks
* Ex-dividend † Ex-scrip ‡ Ex-all
§ Ex-rights # Suspended

Cover relates to the previous year's dividend.
Yields are net of basic rate tax.

Data is provided for information purposes only and is not intended for trading purposes. Speak with a financial advisor before using any data to make transactions.

Winners and losers (pc)



Major price changes FTSE 100

Risers 62	Volume	Close	Change
Croda Intl	1.01m	3160	8.03pc
Unilever	10.35m	4998	8.02pc
Experian	3.43m	2981	6.31pc
Compass	1.98m	2469½	5.90pc
RELX	5.46m	2832	5.59pc
The Sage Grp	3.27m	939½	5.50pc
Diageo	5.02m	1672	5.09pc
Burberry	2.67m	1140	4.97pc
Admiral	0.95m	3766	4.90pc
Pearson	1.16m	1310	4.05pc
3i	3.04m	2913	3.96pc
Coca-Cola Euro	0.20m	8440	3.94pc
Convatec	4.37m	228½	3.63pc
Autotrader Grp	2.56m	528½	3.52pc
GSK	18.38m	2029	3.47pc
Coca-Cola HBC	0.77m	5085	3.40pc
Smith&Neph	3.36m	1200	3.27pc
Babcock Intl	1.74m	1160	3.16pc
Reckitt Benck	1.15m	5176	2.98pc
Imp Brands	2.44m	2900	2.91pc
Haleon	29.79m	380½	2.89pc
BT Group	19.58m	204½	2.79pc

Fallers 34	Volume	Close	Change
Barclays	85.11m	505	-4.79pc
Polar CapTech	4.79m	610½	-3.02pc
Centrica	31.25m	155½	-2.88pc
Lion Finance	0.13m	11440	-2.80pc
Diploma	0.48m	7420	-2.75pc
Glencore	54.29m	506½	-2.43pc
NatWest Group	17.14m	664½	-2.35pc
Weir Group	1.69m	2524	-1.94pc
Standard Chart	5.11m	2097	-1.83pc
BP	31.56m	525½	-1.61pc
Hiscox	2.50m	1819	-1.46pc
Lloyds Bk Gp	118.34m	113	-1.44pc
Shell	4.98m	3234½	-1.30pc
Prudential	6.86m	1076½	-1.19pc
Halma	1.38m	3530	-1.18pc
SSE	2.23m	2352	-1.05pc
Games Works	0.12m	20040	-0.89pc
IG Group	0.94m	1698	-0.88pc
M&G	4.63m	352½	-0.56pc
Anglo Amer	3.32m	3622	-0.52pc
Pershing Square	0.13m	3774	-0.42pc
ICG	1.87m	1930	-0.41pc

Results Roundup

Company	Turnover(£)	Pre - tax(£)	EPS(p)	DIV(p)	Pay Day	XD
Barclays	Int 16.5bn (14.9bn)	6.1bn (5.2bn)	30.700 (24.700)	5.900 (3.000)	Sep 15	Aug 06
Bodycote	Int 381.2m (369.0m)	41.2m (36.6m)	18.100 (15.500)	7.200 (6.900)	Nov 05	Sep 30
Coats Group $	Int 836.9m (705.4m)	104.3m (111.0m)	3.190 (4.090)	1.050 (1.000)	Nov 12	Oct 15
Croda International	Int 880.5m (855.8m)	107.4m (85.5m)	56.500 (43.800)	48.000 (48.000)	Oct 06	Aug 27
Forterra	Int 168.8m (195.1m)	11.5m (8.4m)	4.100 (2.900)	1.700 (1.900)	Oct 09	Sep 17
Games Workshop	Fin 659.7m (617.5m)	275.7m (262.8m)	624.000 (594.900)	140.000 (55.000)	Oct 05	Aug 27
Inchcape	Int 4.7bn (4.3bn)	186.0m (234.0m)	23.900 (32.400)	10.800 (9.500)	Sep 14	Aug 06
Man Group $	Int 892.0m (604.0m)	264.0m (77.0m)	18.000 (4.500)	5.700 (5.700)	Sep 18	Aug 06
Unilever €	Int 25.6bn (25.5bn)	4.7bn (4.6bn)	152.000 (160.000)	46.640 (45.280)	Jun 26	May 14
Unite Group	Int 208.4m (181.1m)	-417.1m (185.9m)	-79.700 (38.000)	12.800 (12.800)	Oct 30	Sep 17

World market indices

		Index	Change	
Australia	All Ordinaries	9112.00	+48.20	+0.53pc
Brazil	Bovespa	176564.75	+1230.29	+0.70pc
China	Shanghai Composite	3813.31	-44.93	-1.16pc
France	CAC General	8458.78	+52.72	+0.63pc
Germany	DAX	25464.01	+102.98	+0.41pc
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	25310.85	+103.67	+0.41pc
India	BSE S&P SENSEX	76765.92	-69.86	-0.09pc
Japan	Nikkei	62364.92	-2566.27	-3.95pc
Singapore	Straits Times	5616.11	-4.13	-0.07pc
Spain	Madrid SE	1951.70	-2.80	-0.14pc
Switzerland	SMI Index	14571.33	+149.36	+1.04pc
USA	Dow Jones	52747.32	+537.24	+1.03pc
USA	Nasdaq	24876.91	-55.17	-0.22pc

Commodities summary

		Price	Change	
Gold	per troy oz	$4027.24	-51.24	-1.26pc
Silver	per troy oz	£42.99	-0.90	-2.06pc
Krugerrand		£2981.50	-34.60	-1.15pc
New Sovereign		£707.19	-9.56	-1.33pc
Maples		£3010.24	-34.56	-1.14pc
Platinum	per oz	£1207.05	-12.12	-0.99pc
Palladium	per oz	£950.44	-18.49	-1.91pc
Copper†	grade A	£10265.20	-72.52	-0.70pc
Tin†	high grade	£40178.30	-678.20	-1.66pc
Lead†		£1418.52	-2.97	-0.21pc
Zinc†	special high grade	£2683.95	-32.06	-1.18pc
Aluminium†	high grade	£2368.72	-15.20	-0.64pc
Nickel†		£12748.27	-226.94	-1.75pc
Baltic Dry Index*		2664.00	-32.00	-1.19pc
Wheat	per tonne	£199.00	-0.75	-0.38pc
Brent Crude	Sep settlement	$84.09	-4.27	-4.83pc

*Copyright Baltic Exchange Information Services Ltd. †Data provided by the London Metal Exchange.

Exchange rates

Tourist rates for indication use only. www.travelex.co.uk

£ - Eur Rate 1.1674 Change -0.23¢ £ - $ Rate 1.3292 Change -0.10¢

		Tourist £1 -	Sterling £1 -	1 Euro -	1 Dollar -
Australia	Aus $	1.8609	1.9077	1.6342	1.4352
Canada	Can $	1.8185	1.8747	1.6059	1.4104
Denmark	Krone	8.3497	8.7261	7.4751	6.5652
Euro	€	1.1439	1.1674	...	0.8783
Hong Kong	HK $	9.9361	10.4226	8.9284	7.8415
India	Rupee	97.41	127.4090	109.1433	95.8575
Israel	Shekels	3.8213	4.0666	3.4836	3.0595
Japan	Yen	212.54	217.8145	186.5881	163.8750
Kuwait	Dinar	...	0.4128	0.3537	0.3106
New Zealand	NZ $	2.2263	2.3001	1.9704	1.7306
Norway	Krone	12.3671	12.8759	11.0300	9.6874
Pakistan	Rupee	340.39	369.2047	316.2746	277.7750
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	4.7467	4.9897	4.2743	3.7540
Singapore	$	1.6374	1.7179	1.4716	1.2925
South Africa	Rand	21.4462	22.2583	19.0673	16.7462
Sweden	Krona	12.3422	12.9238	11.0710	9.7233
Switzerland	Franc	1.0587	1.0877	0.9318	0.8184
Thailand	Baht	43.1801	44.6195	38.2228	33.5700
UAE	Dirham	4.7145	4.8816	4.1818	3.6728
UK	£	...	...	0.8567	0.7524
USA	$	1.2990	1.3292	1.1386	...

Money & Rates

RPI (1987=100)	Jun 416.50	+0.3pc	+3.0pc
RPIX (Target 2.5pc)	Jun 409.70	+1.1	+2.9pc
CPI (2015=100 target 2pc)	Jun 142.50	+0.1pc	+2.6pc
Lloyds house price index	Jun 516.20	+0.2pc	+0.6pc
Bank Rate			3.75pc
Nationwide Base Mortgage Rate			5.75pc
US Fed Funds			3.5-3.75pc
US Long Bonds Yld			5.09pc
European base rate			2.40pc

AXA Investment Managers UK Limited

22 Bishopsgate, London, EC2N 4BQ
www.axa-im.co.uk Cust Svc: 0345 777 5511

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
AXA Ppl & Planet Eqty R GBP	-		291.3	-3.80
Amer Gwth Acc	-		1731	-9.00
Biotech Acc	-		329.4	-0.70
Global Sust Mngd R Acc	-		608.6	-5.30
Global Tech	-		381.9	-10.60
Global Thematics R GBP Acc	-		2677	-26.00
Health Acc	-		3298	-47.00
Japan R GBP Acc	-		919.3	-25.40
Managed Income R Gross Acc	-		224.5	+0.20
Managed Income R Gross Dis	-		94.69	+0.08
UK Select Opps R Acc	-		4253	+17.00
UK Select Opps R Inc	-		2134	+9.00
UK Smlr Cos Acc	-		342.8	-1.70
UK Sust Equity R Acc	-		377.7	+1.50

AXA IM Funds www.axa-im.co.uk

Blue Whale Capital

0345 307 3439
www.bluewhale.co.uk

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Blue Whale Growth R Acc	-		*408.17	-17.87

BNY Mellon Fund Managers

Investors: 0800 614330 Brokers: 08085 660000
www.bnymellonim.co.uk,
clientservices@bnymellon.com

BNY Mellon Investment Funds (ICVC)
Sterling Income Shares

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Global Income	0%		336.09	...
Corporate Bond	0%		81.87	...
Equity Inc	0%		142.69	...
Equity Inc Booster	0%		90.37	...
Glob Abs Ret‡	0%		109.35	...
Glob Multi-Strat	0%		136.5	...
Inflation-Linked Corp Bd	0%		116.11	...
Long-Term Global Equity	0%		492.72	...
Asian Income	0%		308.32	...
European Opps	0%		475.58	...
Global Dynamic Bd	0%		84.45	...
Global High Yield Bd	0%		47.54	...
International Bd	0%		191.19	...
Multi-Asset Bal	0%		307.42	...
Mult-Asset Div Return	0%		197.63	...
Mult-Asset Growth	0%		1633.31	...
Oriental	0%		1204.41	...
Real Return A	0%		135.36	...
UK Equity Fund	0%		1213.14	...
UK Income	0%		102.16	...
UK Opportunities	0%		463.89	...

B Shares

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Global Income	0%		379.14	...
Corporate Bond	0%		99.15	...
Equity Inc	0%		107.1	...
Equity Inc Booster	0%		71.26	...
Glob Abs Ret	0%		116.8	...
Glob Multi-Strat	0%		140.25	...
Inflation-Linked Corp Bd	0%		116.18	...
Long-Term Global Equity	0%		378.73	...
Asian Income	0%		193.75	...
Continental European	0%		314.04	...
Global Dynamic Bd	0%		82.74	...
Global High Yield Bd	0%		76.41	...
International Bd	0%		87.68	...
Multi-Asset Bal	0%		207.43	...
Mult-Asset Div Return	0%		152.97	...
Mult-Asset Growth	0%		327.17	...
Oriental	0%		244.87	...
Real Return A	0%		122.48	...
UK Equity Fund	0%		209.48	...
UK Income	0%		208.05	...
UK Opportunities	0%		231.14	...
Emerging Income	0%		135.72	...
Global Emerging Mkts	0%		274.81	...
Global Equity Fund	0%		394.01	...
Multi Asset Inc	0%		141.53	...

Discretionary Unit Fund

No 1, Poultry, London EC2R 8JR. 020 7415 4130

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Maitland Discretionary Inc	3.00		2247.39	-6.92

Fundsmith LLP

PO Box 10846, Chelmsford, Essex, CM99 2BW.
0330 123 1815
www.fundsmith.co.uk enquiries@fundsmith.co.uk

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Fundsmith Equity T Acc	-		687.8	+5.33
Fundsmith Equity T Inc	-		620.78	+4.81

Guinness Global Investors

18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ
www.guinnessgi.com
+44(0)20 7222 5703

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Sustainable Energy Acc	-		25.2609	...
Global Innovators Acc	-		45.8385	...
Global Equity Income Inc	-		24.5805	...

Available as an ISA

Janus Henderson Investors

PO Box 9023 Chelmsford, CM99 2WB
Enquiries: 0800 832 832
Website: www.janushenderson.com

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Cautious Managed A Acc	5.00		356.8	...
Cautious Managed A Inc	5.00		154.5	...
China Opps A Acc	5.00		*1310	-5
Emerg Mkts Opps A Acc	5.00		285.9	...
European Sel Opps A Acc	5.00		*3185	-18
Fixed Int Mthly Inc A Inc	4.25		17.11	...
Global Care Growth A Inc	4.50		696.1	...
Global Equity Inc A Inc	5.25		*86.14	-0.26
Global Select Acc	4.25		6314	...
Global Strategic Cap Acc	5.00		430.5	...
Global Technology A Acc	5.00		6679	...
Inst UK IDX Opp Tr	-		180.242	...
Janus Asian Dividend In Ut	5.00		97.49	...
Janus Emer Mkts Asia A Acc	5.00		1745	-42
Janus Multi-Mgr Inc&Gwth A	5.25		160.2	...
Multi-Mgr Abs Ret A Acc	5.00		186.5	...
Multi-Mgr Active A Acc	5.00		329.5	-1.2
Multi-Mgr Distbn A Inc	5.25		135.8	...
Multi-Mgr Divrsfd A Acc	-		105.2	...
Multi-Mgr Inc&Gwth A Acc	5.00		229.6	...
Multi-Mgr Mangd A Acc	5.00		397.7	-1.2
Multi-Mgr Mangd A Inc	5.00		366.9	-1.1
Sterling Bond Acc	4.25		229.1	...
Sterling Bond Inc	4.25		55.33	...
Strategic Bond A Inc	4.00		95.31	...
UK Absolute Return A Acc	5.00		*207	-0.2
UK Alpha A Acc	5.25		196.2	-0.6
UK Smaller Cos A ACC	5.00		914.6	...
UK Equity Income A Inc	5.00		699.5	...
UK Index Opps Tst A Acc	-		177.9739	...
US Growth A Acc	5.00		*2891	-2

Available as an ISA

J.P. Morgan Asset Management

60 Victoria Embankment, London, EC4Y 0JP
Clients:0800 204020.Brokerline 0800 727770

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
JPM Ems C Net Dis	-		262.4000	-8.2000
JPM Japan C Net Acc	-		464.5000	-15.0000
JPM Natural Res C Net ACC	-		1611.0000	-16.0000
JPM UK Equity Core E Acc	-		*707.2000	+1.4000
JPM UK Equity Core E Inc	-		*92.7300	+0.1900
JPM US Eq Inc C Net	-		*588.1000	+3.2000
JPM US Eq Inc C Net Dis	-		*588.1000	+3.1000
JPM US Select C Net Acc	-		1239.0000	+4.0000
JPM US Sm Cos Gwth C Net Ac	-		1274	+16

Jupiter Unit Trust Managers Ltd

The Zig Zag Building, 70 Victoria Street, London,
SW1E 6SQ
020 3817 1000

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Jupiter Asian Inc L Acc	-		334.99	-3.3219
Jupiter Asian Inc L Inc	-		225.76	-3.3219
Jupiter China L Acc	-		118.07	-0.6556
Jupiter China L Inc	-		108.09	-0.6556
Jupiter Corp Bond L Inc	-		51.14	+0.1735
Jupiter Eco L Inc	-		691.33	-6.0390
Jupiter European L Inc	-		3880	-1.4096
Jupiter Euro Inc L Acc	-		85.01629	...
Jupiter Euro Inc L Inc	-		49.78698	...
Jupiter Euro Special Sits L Acc	-		583.15	-1.3923
Jupiter Fin Opp L Inc	-		1319.09	-1.2646
Jupiter Fund Of Inv Tsts L Inc	-		392.68	-0.8690
Jupiter Global Emg Mkts L Acc	-		98.62	-5.3625
Jupiter Global Fnl Innov L Acc	-		220.06	-3.9340
Jupiter Income Trust L Inc	-		*699.94	+0.9645
Jupiter India L Acc	-		213.52	-0.3777
Jupiter Japan Inc L Acc	-		213.58	-2.4786
Jupiter Japan Inc L Inc	-		138.92	-2.4786
Jupiter Merlin Bal Prtfo L Acc	-		339.34	+0.4538
Jupiter Merlin Bal Prtfo L Inc	-		194.55	+0.4542
Jupiter Merlin Grth Prtfo L Acc	-		815.45	+0.4250
Jupiter Merlin Grth Prtfo L Inc	-		787.84	+0.4250
Jupiter Merlin Inc Prtfo L Acc	-		*464.99	+0.2706
Jupiter Merlin Inc Prtfo L Inc	-		*163.73	+0.2706
Jupiter Merlin WW Prtfo L Inc	-		592.9	-0.4962
Jupiter Merlin WW Prtfo L Acc	-		583.62	-0.4962
Jupiter Monthly Alt Inc L Acc	-		139.11	+0.1443
Jupiter Monthly Alt Inc L Inc	-		23.17	+0.1443
Jupiter Merlin Select L Acc	-		125.2	-0.0757
Jupiter Merlin Select L Dis	-		55.53	-0.0757
Jupiter Responsible Inc L Acc	-		171.25	+0.0406
Jupiter Responsible Inc L Inc	-		78.69	+0.0406
Jupiter Global Strat Bond L Acc	-		110.03	+0.0660
Jupiter Global Strat Bond L Inc	-		53.48	+0.0660
Jupiter UK Growth L Inc	-		283.81	+1.2022
Jupiter UK Dynamic Eq L DIS	-		289.09	+0.9716
Jupiter Unitstd Van F	3.50		427.31	-0.4020
Jupiter US Sml Cos Inst I Acc	-		80.99	...
Jupiter US Sml Cos Ret Acc	-		74.46	...

Marks & Spencer Unit Trust Management Ltd

Kings Meadow, Chester, CH99 9UT
0870 333 1835

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
High Income Inc	-	88	88	...
High Income Acc	-	295.9	295.9	...
UK Select Port Inc	-	*479	479	...
UK Selection Port	-	*1095.8	1095.8	...
UK 100 Co's Fund Inc	-	321.3	321.3	...
UK 100 Co's Fund Acc	-	714.2	714.2	...
W'wide Man Inc	-		*735.4	...
W'wide Man Acc	-		*1321	...

M&G Securities Ltd

PO Box 9039, Chelmsford, CM99 2XG
Enq: 0800 390 390. UT Deal: 0800 328 3196

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Charity Multi Asset Acc	-		1592.05	-0.16
Charity Multi Asset Dis	-		109.28	-0.16
Eqty Inv Chrties GBP Acc	-		4615.82	+0.01
Eqty Inv Chrties GBP Dis	-		1912.22	+0.01

CAR - Net Income reinvested.

Natwest Investment Funds

(RBS Collective Investment Funds Ltd)
PO Box 249, York YO90 1ZY
0117 940 3848

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Global Bond Fund Inc	-		86.34	...
Mangd Eqty Grwth Fnd Acc	-		186.96	...
Mangd Grwth Fund Inc	-		156.66	...
Mangd Grwth Fund Acc	-		170.84	...
UK Eqty Fund Acc	-		180.58	...
UK Eqty Fund Inc	-		141.97	...

Yealand Fund Services Limited

Admin: Stuart House, St John's St,
Peterborough PE1 5DD
Dealing & Enquiries: 0345 850 0255

Name	Init chge	Sell	Mid Buy	Change on day
Generation Fd	5.00		*1100.09	...
FENIX Balanced Fund Dis	5.00		*216.67	...

Initial charge:

This charge in percentage terms is included in the purchase price of the units. It is levied by the unit trust manager to cover administrative costs and commissions.

* Denotes Ex-dividend ‡ Denotes Suspended

Data provided by ice www.ice.com/data

Sharing a business from across the world

Annie Hayes meets siblings who run companies from opposite ends of the globe and somehow make it work

Ian Hammersley, 46, right, lives in Cheshire, while his older brother, Mark, 48, is in Auckland, New Zealand

RUNNING a business with a sibling on the opposite side of the world means someone is always asleep while the other is working.

This is a predicament that Ian Hammersley, 46, knows well. He lives in Cheshire while his older brother and business partner Mark, 48, is in Auckland, New Zealand – more than 11,000 miles away.

Together they run a business coaching e-commerce brands to boost profitability, simply named Hammersley Brothers, working with companies such as Thorntons and Aga.

While running a long-distance business has its difficulties, the upside is a brand that can grow across borders, underpinned with the kind of brutal honesty only a sibling can deliver. As running a business in the UK becomes increasingly difficult, with elevated tax burdens and rising labour costs, families may be well placed to capitalise on this special relationship – even if it means dealing with different time zones.

According to PwC's Global Family Business Survey, a quarter of family businesses achieved double-digit sales growth last year.

"Siblings understand each other's strengths, weaknesses and ways of communicating without having to consciously think about it, which can allow them to make decisions as a united front when under pressure," says Tej Samani, an honorary research fellow in business and management at the University of Sussex.

The Hammersley brothers' upbringing also helped them build their business, which Ian founded in 2005 and Mark joined soon after, even though they broke away from the family legacy.

"We're originally bakers," says Ian – fourth generation ones at that. "We grew up talking business at the kitchen table. It just felt normal."

The business was going strong, but the arrangement changed dramatically for the brothers when Mark got married, had a child and decided to move to Auckland, where his wife is from, in 2009.

"We were turning over about a million a year," says Ian. "But we decided to give it a go. Waving him off felt like a bereavement."

The brothers were under no illusions about what lay ahead.

"Let's face it – no one in their right mind would run a business with someone living in a time zone which is 11 to 13 hours ahead of the UK. It's ridiculous," he says. The first few years were hard. "I was the one in the office with staff while Mark was strolling down a beach in New Zealand. I won't lie – there was resentment."

But the sibling dynamic has its advantages. "You can't have those conversations with your best friend. With your brother there's no ego, no airs and graces. We grew up as little boys together. Mark made me cry when he told me Father Christmas wasn't real," Ian said.

> 'With your brother there's no ego, no airs and graces. We grew up as little boys together'

Katie McCourt also believes distance has become an advantage in running her business with her sister, Amanda.

The pair run Not Basics, an organic cotton clothing brand with a 73,000-strong Instagram following. Amanda, 34, lives in Godalming, Surrey, while Katie, 30, is in Vancouver, Canada – 4,700 miles away.

They have been in business for six years. Katie went travelling in 2018, ended up in Vancouver and, when lockdown hit, never came back. They began by repurposing T-shirts into underwear sets, secured angel investment and now sell everyday essentials including leggings and tracksuits. This year the business is on track to turn over £1.4m and sell 70,000 units.

"Having less time together forces us to be laser-focused, and I actually think the business is better for it," says Katie. The eight-hour time difference is a challenge, but also a strength.

"It keeps the business running and us responding around the clock," Amanda says.

Sisters Jess and Becca Stern also live on opposite sides of the world – Jess, 35, in London and Becca, 38, in Newcastle, Australia.

Yet despite the 10,500 miles between them, they have built Mustard Made, a homeware brand known for its colourful palette and metal locker designs, with a revenue of £11.5m in 2024-25.

Jess built a career in fashion in the UK, while Becca moved to Australia and ran her own jewellery business. It was there, on maternity leave, that she came up with the idea for Mustard Made. They launched with just A$25,000 (£13,000) in savings.

Within six months of their first Sydney trade show, they had secured over A$200,000 in orders, smashing their two-year projections in a single weekend.

The division of responsibilities happened naturally, and over time their husbands joined the business too, making it a full family affair.

"Jess and I are very different," says Becca. "I've always worked for myself and get excited by big ideas and storytelling. Jess came from a corporate career in fashion buying and loves working with our factory and building the team. Those differences have become our strength."

They make a point of getting together in person at least twice a year. As their families have grown – they have five children between them – it has become harder to arrange, but also more precious.

"There's something quite special about wanting success for the other person as much as yourself," Becca reflects. "That creates a different dynamic from a traditional business partnership."

Jess, left, and Becca Stern of Mustard Made, known for its colourful homeware

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BUSINESS BULLETIN

Barclays boss: Bank tax will hurt the economy

A fresh bank tax raid would hurt growth and undermine plans to bolster the economy, the boss of Barclays has warned Andy Burnham.

CS Venkatakrishnan, the bank's chief executive, said the move would suck funds away from the economy.

"[For] every pound of capital that remains in the banking system, we lend £8 to £10 into the economy," he said. There is speculation that Labour could launch a windfall tax on banks, arguing that the industry has received an unearned boost to profits from higher interest rates.

Australia to build first oil refinery since 1965

Australia is planning to build its first new oil refinery since 1965 after petrol stations ran dry earlier this year.

Anthony Albanese, the Australian prime minister, said his Labor government would spend A$4m (£2m) on a feasibility study for the plant, which would be built in the Pilbara region on the country's north-west coast. The investment comes after more than 100 petrol forecourts across Australia ran dry in the early weeks of the war in Iran. The conflict squeezed crude oil shipments to refineries in south-east Asia, on which it depends.

Unilever raises forecasts after best sales in decade

Consumer goods giant Unilever has upped its annual outlook after notching up its best quarterly sales performance in more than a decade.

The Marmite to Dove soap maker's shares surged 8pc yesterday after strong performance in its first half, with sales growth ramping up to 5.8pc in the second quarter.

Overall sales lifted 0.5pc in the first half and pre-tax profits rose 1.8pc to €4.66bn (£3.98bn) in the six months to June 30. Unilever said it now expected full-year sales growth within its 4pc to 6pc medium-term guidance.

Never mind the heat, people crave cottage pie

Waitrose has reported a surprise spike in sales of winter comfort foods such as cottage pies, mac and cheese and gratins – despite the heatwaves.

The grocer said sales of cottage pies were up 110pc while chicken and ham gratin and South African red wine were both up 68pc over the last month.

The supermarket said customers were showing signs of "feta fatigue", bypassing traditional summer salads in favour of cold-weather comfort foods. Stephen Parkins-Knight, a Waitrose chef , said: "We're seeing a trend in 'reverse comfort eating'."

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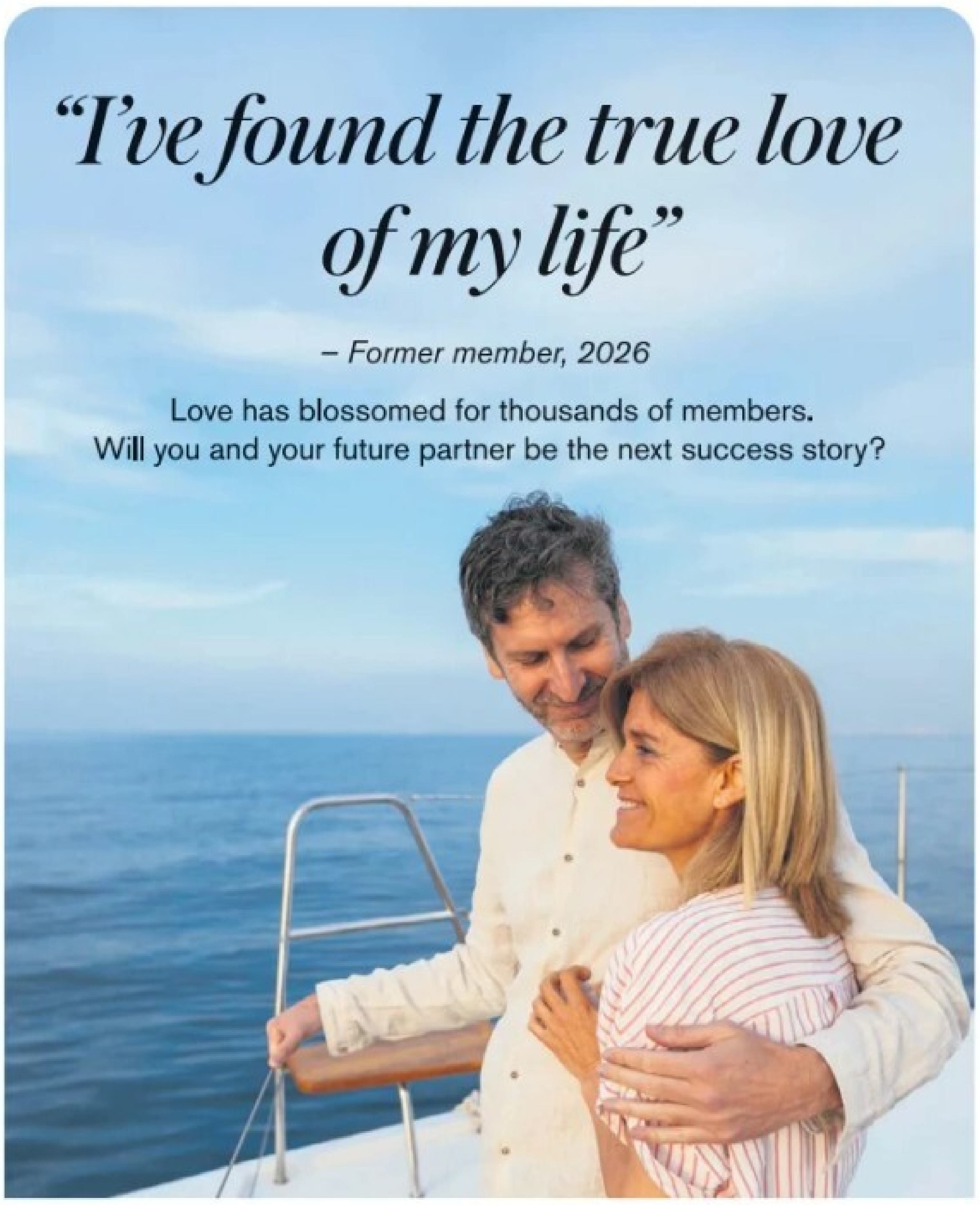
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Court & Social

Court Circular

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
July 28th
The King and Queen were represented by Mr Michael More-Molyneux (His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey) at the Funeral of Dame Penelope Keith (Actress) which was held in Guildford Cathedral this morning.

The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh were represented by Sir Richard Stilgoe.

The Princess Royal was represented by Colonel John Boyd.

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester were represented by His Honour Judge Robert Fraser.

The Duke of Kent was represented by Professor Stephen Jarvis.

Princess Alexandra, the Hon Lady Ogilvy was represented by Mrs Diane Duke.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
July 28th
The Duke of Edinburgh, Honorary Deputy Commissioner, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, this afternoon held a Meeting via video link with Mr Michael Duheme (Commissioner) in Canada.

His Royal Highness Colonel-in-Chief, Saskatchewan Dragoons, later held a Meeting via video link with Major Paul Park (Commanding Officer) in Canada.

Today's birthdays

Sir Michael Pickard, Chairman, London Docklands Development Corporation, 1992-98, is 94; **Sir Roger Bone**, former diplomat, 82; **Miss Diane Keen**, actress, 80; **Adml Sir James Perowne**, former Constable and Governor, Windsor Castle; Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, 1998-2002, 79; **the Rev Brendan Callaghan**, SJ, Master of Campion Hall, Oxford, 2008-13, 78; **Mr Dermot Weld**, racehorse trainer, 78; **Prof Andrew Wallace-Hadrill**, ancient historian, classical archaeologist and academic; Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, 2009-13, 75; **Lord Blackwell**, Chairman, Lloyds Banking Group, 2014-21, 74; **Mr Joe Johnson**, snooker world champion, 1986, 74; **Sir Stephen Timms**, MP, social security minister, 71; **Ms Anna Bradley**, Chairman, Solicitors Regulation Authority; and of the Rail Safety and Standards Board, 2015-18, 69; **Ms Sally Gunnell**, Olympic gold medallist, 400m hurdles, Barcelona 1992; television presenter, 60; **Mr Akram Khan**, dancer and choreographer, 52; and **Mr Fernando Alonso**, racing driver; Formula One world champion 2005 and 2006, 45.

Today is the anniversary of the death of Vincent Van Gogh in 1890 and of the opening by George VI of the XIV Olympic Games in London in 1948.

Clergy news

Appointments
Revv ; ; Gareth Ingham, p-in-c, Criftins with Dudleston and Welsh Frankton, and Petton with Cockshutt, Welshampton and Lyneal with Colmere (Lichfield), to be r, Condover with Ryton, Acton Burnel, Frodesley and Pitchford, and rural church missr, Condover (Hereford); Can Dr Taiwo Olumuyiwa, tv, Bushbury The Good Shepherd and St James (Lichfield), to be p-in-c, Wednesbury St Bartholomew and St James and St John and Wednesbury Wood Green St Paul (same dio); Preb Romita Shrisunder, bp dir of ords (Lichfield), to be can for community outreach and social justice, Derby Cathedral (Derby); Andrew Simpson, v, Barton Under Needwood with Dunstall and Tatenhill (Lichfield), to be also ac, Hanbury, Newborough and Rangemore (same dio).

Bridge news

Last week, the highest score in the EBU morning Relaxed Games was 70.83%, **writes Julian Pottage, Bridge Correspondent**. One pair achieved this score: Colin Coxon partnering Derek Boreham on Tuesday. The highest score in the EBU evening Relaxed Games was 73.37%, achieved by Penny Eliot partnering Veronica Dixon on Wednesday.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The Daily Telegraph

LONDON, THURSDAY JULY 29, 1926

AUCTION-ROOM STORY OF A FOILED BURGLARY.

A £60,900 ROMNEY.

WORLD RECORD PRICE.

A story of a foiled burglary may now be told which sends into high relief the epoch-making event of a pair of George Romney kit-cats of eighteenth-century winsomeness and allurement bringing 71,000 guineas between them at Christie's yesterday.

Two years ago Sir William Bromley-Davenport brought the beautiful portrait of "Mrs. Davenport" and the fascinating capture of "Lady Hamilton" from his country house to his London flat. Then, as he had to go away, he deemed it wise to have the "blest pair of sirens" placed in some strong-room, and to hang two less valuable pictures in their stead. As soon as he had gone the flat was entered and the pair of substitutes spirited away. The burglars were obviously acting under the directions of expert miscreants, and had evidently been ordered to take a pair of portraits hanging precisely in certain positions. "They took nothing else," said Sir William, "except a counterpane in which they had folded up the canvases of the substitutes from which they had stripped the frames."

Sir William Bromley-Davenport's theory concerning the burglary is that, just as there are misers who worship money in secret, there are picture-misers who would furtively gloat over the possession of works of art which they would never dare to offer for sale. Relief, therefore, rather than elation was expressed by Sir William yesterday, although he would have been more than human if he had not felt proud that his pair of portraits should bring twice as much as his most optimistic conjecture, and that he himself should be a witness of the sale of "Mrs. Davenport" at 58,000 guineas – the world's auction maximum for any picture.

MARVELLOUS BIDDING.

When the exquisite "Mrs, Davenport" was placed on the auction easel it won all hearts, and a ringing cheer went up. The wonderful modernity of the charming portrait fascinated everybody, and Sir William Bromley-Davenport could be pardoned for saying to us: "Does she not look as if she had just been to Buckingham Palace garden party?" The bidding began at once at 5,000gs, and raced to 9,000gs, when there was a slight hiatus. But Mr. Alec Martin, standing near to Mr. Lance Hannen, the auctioneer, then nodded an advance, and the next nod came from Mr. Charles Carstairs, of Messrs. Knoedler, in ambush behind the baize screen. In nearly forty years as an auction eye-witness I have never seen such bidding as ensued. Nod and counter-nod followed in swift succession, with Mr. Hannen scoring the progressive thousands in vehement staccato. One thought of an express train dashing through all the stations. Will it ever stop? must have been the question which many put to themselves as 20,000, 30,000, 40,000gs were left behind. But even art-finance has to stop or run into the buffers, and at the lust nod of 58,000gs from Mr. Martin (who had much to do with the success of the Sargent sale last year), his opponent finished.

SIR JOSEPH DUVEEN'S ANNEXATIONS.

Immediately Mr. Martin informed the auctioneer that he had been acting for Sir Joseph Duveen, and the public announcement of the fact was duly made. A visitor, who had been regretting his inability to go to Goodwood, found comfort in noting a sporting parallel. "The Duveens," quoth he, "are now filling the first, second, and third places in the Romney Stakes," and he proceeded to cite this 58.000gs " Mrs. Davenport", the 52,000gs "Beckford Children" and the 39,400gs "Anne Lady de la Pole".

As for the kit-cat of Romney's and Nelson's "Emma," which followed, Mr. Edward Duveen, openly acting for his brother from the start, won it at 13,000gs, and, as the total of the day reached over £115,500 – an unprecedented amount for any season's last picture sale – it will be gathered that there were other striking incidents. Such were the Wimbledon recluse's Raeburn portrait of his forbear, "Sir Duncan Campbell," for which Mr. Carstairs gave 5,200gs; a Rembrandt portrait of himself, 3,000gs (Mr. Edward Smith); and another Rembrandt, a portrait of the Duchess of Lorraine, 3,400gs (Guerault), which had brought only 20gs in Admiral Lysaght's sale, 1,860gs. And a man with a mania for arithmetic said, "Do you know that the price for Romney's 'Mrs. Davenport' works out at £83 a square inch?"

FINAL TEST MATCH: PLAY TO A FINISH.

It was decided at the Imperial cricket conference at the Oval yesterday, over which Lord Harris, representing England, presided, that the final Test match shall be played to a finish, however long it may last. The match will be begun at the Oval on Aug. 14.

The Australian representatives raised the question of allotting four days to Test matches in this country. No decision was taken, but the general feeling was that, if a departure were to be made from the three-day system, an extension to five days would be preferable to one of four days.

Upon the matter of the follow-on, to enforce which in Australia a side must lead by 200 runs, the law of this country, which gives the option to the side leading by 150 runs, will govern the Final Test match.

EMPIRE SETTLEMENT.

Mr. Amery, Secretary for Dominion Affairs, received at the House of Commons last evening a deputation consisting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Unionist members of Parliament, who discussed with him the need for speeding-up Empire settlement, A report on the subject prepared by a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Sir John Pennefather, and approved by the members for the two counties, was submitted to Mr. Amery.

The sub-committee dealt with the question of migration from the point of view especially of the needs of the densely-populated industrial districts of Lancashire and Cheshire. They expressed the opinion that the Empire Settlement Act had failed to achieve the objects for which it was passed. Migration had decreased since 1922, and in 1925 was not much over a quarter of what it was in 1913. The fact that emigration and migration had not kept up with the growth of population had much to do with the evils from which the country now suffered. Some improvement in migration might be expected this year, and more perhaps in following years, but they could not find grounds for anticipating under present conditions an increase in the near future sufficient to meet existing needs.

OBSTACLES TO MIGRATION

In the Sub-Committee's opinion principal obstacles to large-scale migration from the great industrial districts were:

1. The lack of any adequate organisations for preliminary training and testing in this country of industrial workers to fit them for making a start on the land overseas, and to render them acceptable to the Dominion authorities as migrants who would have a fair chance of success in rural life overseas.

2. The fact that exhausted savings – due to long continued depression of trade – render it impossible for large numbers of suitable migrants to produce even small sums as a preliminary to migration.

3. The natural reluctance of many to forfeit on migration, pension, and other rights to which they are actually or prospectively entitled either as contributors or otherwise.

4. The "restrictions" and "conditions" and "standards" which rule out so large a number of would-be migrants.

The coming Imperial Conference would, it was added, afford the proper opportunity for the representatives of the British and Dominion Governments to review all the circumstances which had caused their joint policy, as expressed in the Empire Settlement Act, to fail, and to consider what effective steps could be taken to bring about the better distribution of the population of the Empire,

Mr. Amery, in his reply, said that no one was more disappointed than he was at the slow progress of Empire settlement, which he regarded as the most important constructive policy before the Empire. He expressed his intention of giving further and very careful consideration to the Sub-Committee's report, which he would certainly bear in mind in connection with the Imperial Conference. The question of training and testing prospective migrants was already under consideration by the Cabinet. He hoped the result would be an extension of facilities.

Bridge Hand

Scotch mist

By **Tom Townsend**

Dealer East **Game All**

North
♠ K J 10
♥ 4 3
♦ A 10 8 7 5
♣ A K 9

West
♠ Q 8 2
♥ J 8 7 6
♦ K 2
♣ Q 7 6 4

East
♠ 7 5
♥ K Q 5 2
♦ 9 4 3
♣ J 10 5 2

South
♠ A 9 6 4 3
♥ A 10 9
♦ Q J 6
♣ 8 3

West	North	East	South
		pass	1♠(1)
pass	2♦(2)	pass	2♠
pass	3♠	pass	3NT(3)
pass	4♣(4)	pass	4♥(4)
pass	5♣(4)	pass	5♠(5)
pass	pass	pass	

(1) Optional opening bid
(2) Natural, forcing to game
(3) Mildly encouraging
(4) Control-showing (cue-bids)
(5) Belatedly shutting up shop

Contract 5♠
Declarer South
Opening Lead ?

THE Scottish teams had a hard time in Riga: 29th in the Open, outscoring only Austria; 19th in the Mixed; 18th in the Seniors. At least they were there, battling away in the European Championships, and beat some teams home.

North-South here for Italy Seniors were Andrea Buratti (half of a widely banned partnership with Massimo Lanzarotti) and 1999 European Champion Guiseppe Failla. East-West for Scotland were Brian Spears and Barnet Shenkin.

Having opened a dubious hand, South should have signed off in 4♠ over 3♠, his weakest action. Over 3NT, apparently a "non-serious" slam try, Buratti (North) cued his way to the five-level. Over 5♣ by Failla, with nothing more to show, he reluctantly passed.

Looking at one hand or four as preferred, what would you lead to 5♠? Clue: South's cue-bid of 4♥ (skipping 4♦) denied diamond control (first or second round). North's bid of 5♣, in that context, logically implied the ♦A.

A trump lead from the ♠Q would be absurd; a club, the suit cue-bid twice by North, merely futile.

A heart is a reasonable choice, but undynamic. With everything breaking and any red-suit finesses apparently working, a routine lead can hardly be expected to prevail.

Shenkin (West) tracked the ♦2, evoking a similar opening lead he made against Claude Rodrigue 50 years ago (featured in one of my Sunday columns this year).

Fearing a singleton lead, South rose with the ♦A. He cashed the ♠K and ran the ♠J. Barnet won and switched to a heart, clearing his side's trick in that suit.

Failla topped the ♥Q with the ♥A, and advanced the ♦Q. Shenkin took the ♦K, put Spears in with the ♥K, and scored a diamond ruff by return for two down. South could have saved a trick by ducking the ♥Q, preparing a heart ruff in dummy.

Against a shrewd West especially, one capable of reading the bidding, South should duck trick one, accepting his God-given diamond finesse. Even if the worst comes to pass – East wins and gives West a ruff – he's still on the trump guess for his contract.

Final Result 5♠ off two, N/S -200
Par Result 4♠ plus one, N/S +650

Chess

Firouzja in fine form

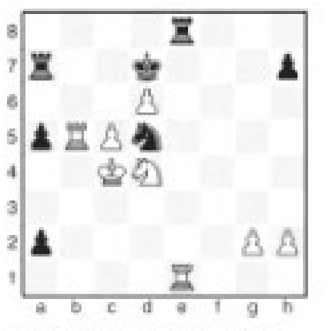
By **Malcolm Pein**

DESPITE a serious ankle injury that forced his withdrawal from the Grand Chess Tour's Superbet Classic Romania earlier this year, Alireza Firouzja is in fine form, and followed up his victory at the GCT's Super Rapid and Blitz Croatia with another first prize at the Quantbox Chennai Grandmasters.

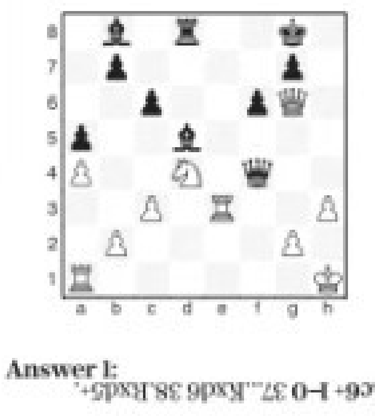
Firouzja, the French number one, won his first two games and drew the rest, to end half a point ahead of Russia's Dmitri Andreikin. Andreikin defeated London Chess Classic winner Nodirbek Abdusattorov in the last round, after the latter blundered.

D Andreikin – N Abdusattorov
Quantbox Chennai GM (7)
Semi Slav Moscow Gambit

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 c6 5.Bg5 dxc4 6.a4 Bb4 7.e4 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 Qa5 9.e5 Ne4 10.Rc1 b5 11.Qc2 Nxg5 12.Nxg5 Qxa4 13.Qxa4 bxa4 14.Ne4 Nd7 15.Bxc4 Ke7 16.f4 a5 17.Rb1 Ba6 (17...c5 18.dxc5 Ba6 was more accurate. Black will win the pawn on c5 and equalise; after 17...c5 18.d5 exd5 19.Bxd5 Rb8 20.Rxb8 Nxb8 21.Nxc5 Na6 22.Nxa4 seems to win a pawn, but 22...Bd7! equalises because if 23.Nb6 Rb8! wins or 23.Nb2 Rb8 24.Nd1 a4 and the a-pawn is very strong) **18.Bxa6 Rxa6 19.Kd2 Rha8** (Not 19...c5 20.Rb7! and if 20...cxd4 21.Nc5 wins) **20.c4 c5!? 21.d5 f6!?** (After 21...exd5 22.cxd5 a3 23.Rhc1 a4 24.Nxc5 Nxc5 25.Rxc5 R8a7 26.Kd3 Ra5 27.Rxa5 Rxa5 28.Kd4 f6 29.Ra1 fxe5+ 30.fxe5 a2 31.Rxa2 a3 the game reaches a curious equilibrium) **22.Rb7 R6a7 23.d6+ Kd8 24.Rb5 fxe5 25.fxe5 Nxe5 26.Rxc5 Nd7 27.Rb5** (White's connected pawns look imposing, but with 27...Rb8 or first 27...Kc8 28.Rhb1 Rb8 29.Rxb8+ Nxb8 they are under lock and key, and if another set of rooks are exchanged, the a-pawns becomes increasingly strong) **27...Nf6?** (A blunder) **28.Nc5** (Black is immediately lost, e6 will fall) **28...Rc8 29.Re1 Ke8 30.Kc3 a3 31.Nxe6 a2 32.c5 Kd7 33.Nxg7 Nd5+ 34.Kc4 Kc6 35.Nf5 Re8 36.Nd4+ Kd7** White to play and win:



A Erigaisi – M Pranesh, after **28...Qc7xf4**. The rook is attacked, and mate on h2 threatened. How did White save himself?



Answer 1:
37.e6+ 1–0 37...Kxd6 38.Rxd5+

Answer 2:
29.Re8+ Rxe8 30.Qxe8+ Kh7
31.Qh5+ forced a draw.

Announcements

Email: announcements.ads@telegraph.co.uk **Book online:** announcements.telegraph.co.uk

Births

MCPHERSON.—On 15th July 2026, at Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, to Olivia (née Stevens) and Rory, a son, Ralph Hector Wolfie, brother to Demelza.
Online Ref: W0051231

Deaths

GOODLIFFE.—Anne Margaret. Passed away on 18th July 2026, aged 88 years. She will be deeply missed by all her family and friends. Funeral Service to take place at Charing Crematorium on Wednesday 19th August 2026 at 2.30 p.m. All funeral enquiries c/o A.W. Court Funeral Directors. Tel: 01622 850840.
Online Ref: W0051261

MARTIN.—Wendy Louisa (née Eaton) died peacefully at home after a battle with cancer aged 50 on Wednesday 22nd July 2026 at 10 p.m. surrounded by her husband, children and close family. Beloved wife of Hugh, proud mother of Tom and Oscar, and stepmother of Tatiana and Freddy. A fan of The Telegraph cryptic crossword. A celebration of Wendy's life will take place at home in West Sussex at 2 p.m. on Wednesday 5th August. Donations to St Catherine's Hospice, Pease Pottage.
Online Ref: W0051202

ROCKALL.—Michael John. Passed peacefully on July 19th 2026 aged 83. Beloved husband, father and a great friend to many. Funeral Service at St Edmund's Church, Southwold on Wednesday August 12th at 12 noon. Family flowers only please, but donations for Cancer Research UK may be gifted at the service or online via "Tributes" at www.rosedalefuneral home.co.uk
Online Ref: W0051263

SIMPSON.—Thomas Gavin of Ridlington, Rutland, always a Scot at heart, died peacefully on 21st July 2026, aged 91 years. Beloved husband, dearest father and father-in-law and the best Babar. Funeral at St Mary Magdalene & St Andrew Church, Ridlington, LE15 9AU on Tuesday 18th August at 2 p.m. Enquiries to E.M. Dorman, Funeral Directors. Tel: 01572 823976.
Online Ref: W0051219

WALKER.—Andrew Douglas. Passed away peacefully on 19th July 2026 aged 81 years, after a battle with melanoma – stoically fought. Beloved husband of Hilly and loving uncle and great-uncle. Funeral Service to be held in the Milton Chapel, Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham, Bucks on Wednesday 19th August at 11.30 a.m. Family flowers only but donations, if wished, to Melanoma Focus c/o Wright Funeral Services, 106 High Street, Great Missenden, Bucks. Tel: 01494 863101.
Online Ref: W0051234

WEATHERSTON.—Ian Robert passed away peacefully surrounded by family on 15th July 2026. Much loved husband of the late Marjorie, father to Carolyn, Robert and Susan and grandfather to Jenny, Oliver, Lydia, Emily, Tara, Lucy, James, Sophie and Anna. He will be greatly missed. Funeral Service at Surrey and Sussex Crematorium on 4th August at 12 noon. Family flowers only please, donations if desired should be made payable to St Peter and St James Hospice and sent c/o Paul Masson Funerals, 42-46 Queens Road, Haywards Heath RH16 1EE.
Online Ref: W0051215

WRIGHT.—Susan "Sue" Liddon Wright (formerly Kent), aged 86, died peacefully on 19th June and is now reunited with her beloved husband Hugh. A loving mother to Kate and proud "Gaddy" to Abigail and Thomas.
Online Ref: W0051196

In memoriam

CLARK.—Norman Vincent, called to rest July 29th 1988. Lovingly remembered. Sonia. RIP.
Online Ref: W0050970

Personal

Text for the day

BLESSED ARE the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
Matthew 5.8 (AV)

Birthdays

JOHN KNOWLES IS 60!
Happy Birthday Dad, all our love from Peter and Mary xx
Online Ref: W0051265

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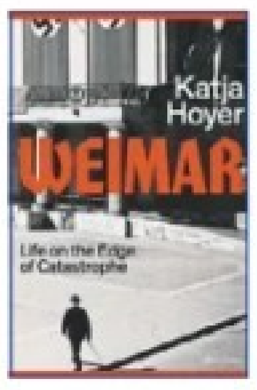
The repellent rise of the Nazis and the new face of fascism in Britain



Weimar: Life on the Edge of Catastrophe

Best-selling historian Katja Hoyer describes the rise of Hitler through the eyes of the people of Weimar. This ancient town in the heart of Germany was home to great thinkers from Goethe and Schiller to Liszt and Nietzsche. It gave its name to the ambitious Weimar Republic in the aftermath of the First World War. But it was also where fascism took hold.

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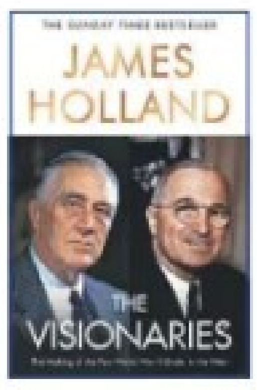

The Visionairies

From the eve of war in 1914 through to the Versailles Treaty and the global financial catastrophe of the late 1920s and the political earthquakes that followed, *The Visionaries* takes a broad sweep of history with important lessons for today. It's a reminder that while history does not repeat itself, patterns of human behaviour certainly do. James Holland's knowledge of the Second World War and its aftermath gives him unique insight into the far-reaching consequences of the financial policies of Roosevelt and Truman.

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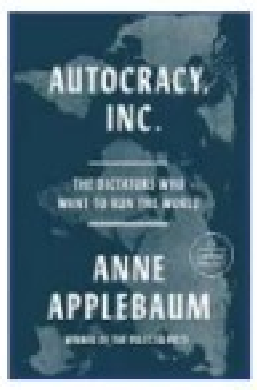

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Nowadays, autocracies are run not by one bad guy, but by networks of kleptocratic financial structures, security services and propagandists. Members are connected across many countries. Corrupt, state-controlled companies in one dictatorship do business with corrupt, state-controlled companies in another. Police in one country can arm, equip, and train police in another. Propagandists share resources and themes, pounding home the same messages about the weakness of democracy and the evil of America.

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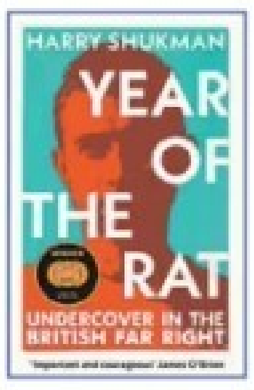

Year of the Rat

Harry Shukman led a double life. Friends and family knew him as a journalist, but unbeknownst to them he was secretly infiltrating the British far right. Equipped with a hidden camera, he posed as 'Chris' and set out to expose right-wing extremists. From canvassing with Britain First to befriending Holocaust deniers, neo-Nazis and a Silicon Valley-backed race-science organisation, Shukman risked his safety and sanity to remove the far right's terrifyingly everyday mask.

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Lord Horam

MP who achieved the rare feat of representing three different parties in the House of Commons

Horam: as a Labour transport minister in the 1970s he described personalised number plates as 'tomfoolery we could well do without'; by 1987, when he joined the Conservatives, he was convinced that Mrs Thatcher was 'forging the only way forward'

JOHN STILLWELL/PA ARCHIVE

LORD HORAM, who has died aged 87, was the only postwar MP to represent three parties in the Commons – Labour, the SDP and the Conservatives – and served in the governments of two.

A journalist and businessman, John Horam was Labour MP for Gateshead West for 11 years and a transport minister under James Callaghan before defecting to the SDP in 1981. Losing his seat two years later, he joined the Conservatives and returned in 1992 as MP for Orpington, John Major appointing him a minister for public services and later for health. He left the Commons in 2010 and was made a life peer in 2013.

In changing party twice, Horam trod a path taken most notably by Sir Winston Churchill. As he answered his first question as a Tory minister, the unforgiving Dennis Skinner exclaimed: "You dirty double rat!"

John Rhodes Horam was born in Preston on March 7 1939, the son of a fitter at Leyland Motors and a newsagent. From Silcoates School, Wakefield, he won an exhibition to St Catharine's College, Cambridge.

He spent two years in marketing with Rowntree before joining the *Financial Times* as a leader writer. He moved on to *The Economist*, staying until 1968, when he co-founded Commodities Research Unit, a business he would return to after losing his seat in 1983.

Horam contested Folkestone and Hythe in 1966, and at a February 1970 by-election was returned for the safe – and tiny – constituency of Gateshead West. At Westminster he challenged Edward Heath's chancellor Anthony Barber to introduce a price freeze as inflation began to take off.

In 1974, with Labour back in power, he was elected vice-chairman of its backbench finance committee. That November he was the only defender of Denis Healey's Budget at a party meeting against the Left's criticism that it was over-friendly to business. As Healey struggled to curb inflation Horam advocated pay controls, describing Arthur Scargill's economics as "mad".

With battle lines forming between Labour's Left and Right, the Manifesto Group was formed in late 1974 as a counter to the Tribune Group, with Horam as its secretary and from 1976 its chairman.

That September Callaghan brought Horam into his government as Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Transport under William Rodgers, who would become one of the SDP's founding "Gang of Four". Horam controversially described personalised car number plates as "tomfoolery we could well do without", and had to answer for the erratic behaviour of a new computer at DVLC in Swansea, which had cost three times the sum budgeted.

He did, however, take satisfaction in announcing the first widening of a stretch of the M1 as traffic reached saturation point. He was piloting through legislation to make seatbelts compulsory when the Labour government fell; the measure was lost.

In 1978 Horam suffered the embarrassment of being stopped for speeding in a government car as he was driven to the House for a crucial division. He missed the vote.

When Margaret Thatcher came to power, Horam joined Healey's shadow Treasury team. But with the Bennite Left rampant, he became immersed in the battle for the soul of the Labour Party, and at its 1980 conference was one of 11 MPs – seven of whom would join the SDP – to call for reform of the Left-dominated National Executive. When Michael Foot defeated Healey for the leadership that December, Horam left the front bench.

He upset the Left by welcoming a 10-point economic programme issued by the Liberal leader David Steel, and when the Gang launched their Council for Social Democracy in January 1981, he was the first backbencher to support it. Horam told his constituency party he would not be its candidate at the next election, and when the SDP was launched that March he was one of 13 Labour MPs to join immediately.

Horam was one of the new party's most effective members. He acted as education spokesman until Shirley Williams won the Crosby by-election, and as the SDP's "fireman" settling disputes with the Liberals over which seats each party should fight.

As economic spokesman, he performed crisply enough for some Labour MPs to wish he had stayed. But from the outset he had a greater faith in market forces than his fellow defectors.

At the 1983 election Horam's constituency disappeared; he fought neighbouring Newcastle Central, coming third. Out of Parliament, he rethought his position, and early in 1987, just as the SDP showed signs of a fightback, he joined the Tories.

Declaring his commitment to a "balanced programme of privatisation and tax cuts", he said that although he still believed that the SDP/Liberal Alliance would probably defeat Labour's "Neanderthals", his place was with Mrs Thatcher, "because she is forging the only way forward which offers any real chance for this country".

Horam was too late to find a seat for that year's election, but after being beaten to the nomination for by-elections at Kensington and Ribble Valley he was chosen to succeed Ivor Stanbrook at Orpington. Given a standing ovation for a free-market speech at the 1990 Party conference, he regretted not having joined the Tories straight from Labour, branding the SDP "a botched job – Labour without the loonies".

Returning to the Commons in 1992 with a 12,935 majority, he was allocated an office with Piers Merchant, who had defeated him in Newcastle. Horam showed an independent turn of mind, urging Norman Lamont to rethink the imposition of VAT on fuel and lamenting tax increases brought in by Kenneth Clarke.

In March 1995 John Major appointed him junior minister for public services and science. Horam, who on the Public Accounts Committee had pilloried the performance of the public sector, proved a stabilising force. Yet he was also an innovator, one of the first two ministers contactable by email.

After eight months, Major moved him to the Department of Health under Stephen Dorrell; Horam started by donating blood in his office. He showed steadiness as a resurgent Labour targeted the Conservatives' handling of the NHS, but on the eve of the 1997 election he hampered Major's attempts to maintain unity over the euro with a "wait and see" policy by coming out firmly against.

Horam chaired the Environmental Audit Committee until 2003, doing much to establish it as Parliament's "green" watchdog. He later served on the Foreign Affairs Select Committee and the 1922 Committee executive.

Into the 2016 referendum, Horam actively supported membership of the EU; his parallel role as a member of the Electoral Commission (from 2012 to 2018) brought accusations from Brexiteers of a conflict of interest. After the vote to leave, he warned peers that it meant "doubling up on the economic challenges this country faces".

John Horam, who died after falling on the way home from the House of Lords, married Iris Crawley in 1977; the marriage was dissolved. In 1987 he married the former *Top Gear* presenter Judith Jackson, who survives him with two sons from her first marriage.

Lord Horam, born March 7 1939, died July 24 2026

Michael Aspinall

Erudite parodist of past divas as the drag act Surprising Soprano

'A merciless ear and eye'

MICHAEL ASPINALL, who has died aged 86, was the Surprising Soprano, a one-man drag act known for parodying opera's greatest divas and murdering its best-loved arias; his equally unorthodox take on Schubert lieder, notably in his engrossing rendition of *Der Erlkönig*, was, like everything he did, rooted in serious research.

"He has a merciless ear and eye for the idiosyncrasies of more orthodox prima donnas, their little vocal tricks, their facial contortions, their weeping gestures," observed the *Financial Times*.

Tall, sandy-haired and draped in feathers and sequins, Aspinall was a cross between Danny La Rue and Anna Russell, the 1950s comic singer famed for her Wagnerian send-ups. "I am the only prima donna to visit Australia who shaved in the plane on the way," he said.

Alone or with his company of seven, La San Carlo di Roma, Aspinall began performing in 1970, when friends in Rome persuaded him to parody the Mad Scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor* for a revue. Most singers, he said, did not mind being brought down a peg or two. "Oh Michael, you did some awful things to me," laughed Joan Sutherland after a private performance in 1980 for the soprano and her conductor husband, Richard Bonynge.

Montserrat Caballé even enlisted his help to create her cadenzas. His targets, however, were more usually the singers of yesteryear, Adelina Patti, Jenny Lind or Maria Callas, though to some he conjured up uncanny memories of Florence Foster Jenkins.

Martin Bernheimer in the *Los Angeles Times* marvelled at his "deliriously extended falsetto range and an even more deliriously extended imagination".

His rare appearances in Britain included a Donizetti comic matron in *The Prima Donna's Mother Is a Drag*, at the 1972 Camden Festival, "brilliantly effective," noted *Opera* magazine, "because it was not too overwhelmingly grotesque in either appearance or voice. Even the parody of a soprano's vocal and bodily antics… had the sense of artistry behind it."

George Michael Aspinall was born in Stockport on October 31 1939, the son of George Aspinall and Vera, née Makin. The family business was in hotels and restaurants; a great aunt had been Nellie Melba's cook.

At 11 he saw *Madama Butterfly*, an experience that displaced his ambition to be an actor with a desire to sing. From Manchester Grammar School he read languages at the University of Manchester, then he taught English in London while studying singing with Anthony Benskin, who made his students sing scales in a high register.

Still formally a baritone, he took lessons in Rome with 92-year-old Vincenzo D'Alessandro, specialising in *bel canto*. Aspinall discovered a talent for falsetto singing while imitating the mistakes of young singers he was teaching.

Paolo Poli, the celebrated Italian comic, introduced him to musical satire and drag, and they began touring Italy together. At first Aspinall was convinced the conceit would work only among musicians but he soon found that even those who did not know opera "laughed at the farcical side".

He appeared as himself in Walton's *Façade* and was occasionally seen in full-scale opera, notably as Mother Goose in Ken Russell's 1982 Florence staging of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* conducted by Riccardo Chailly.

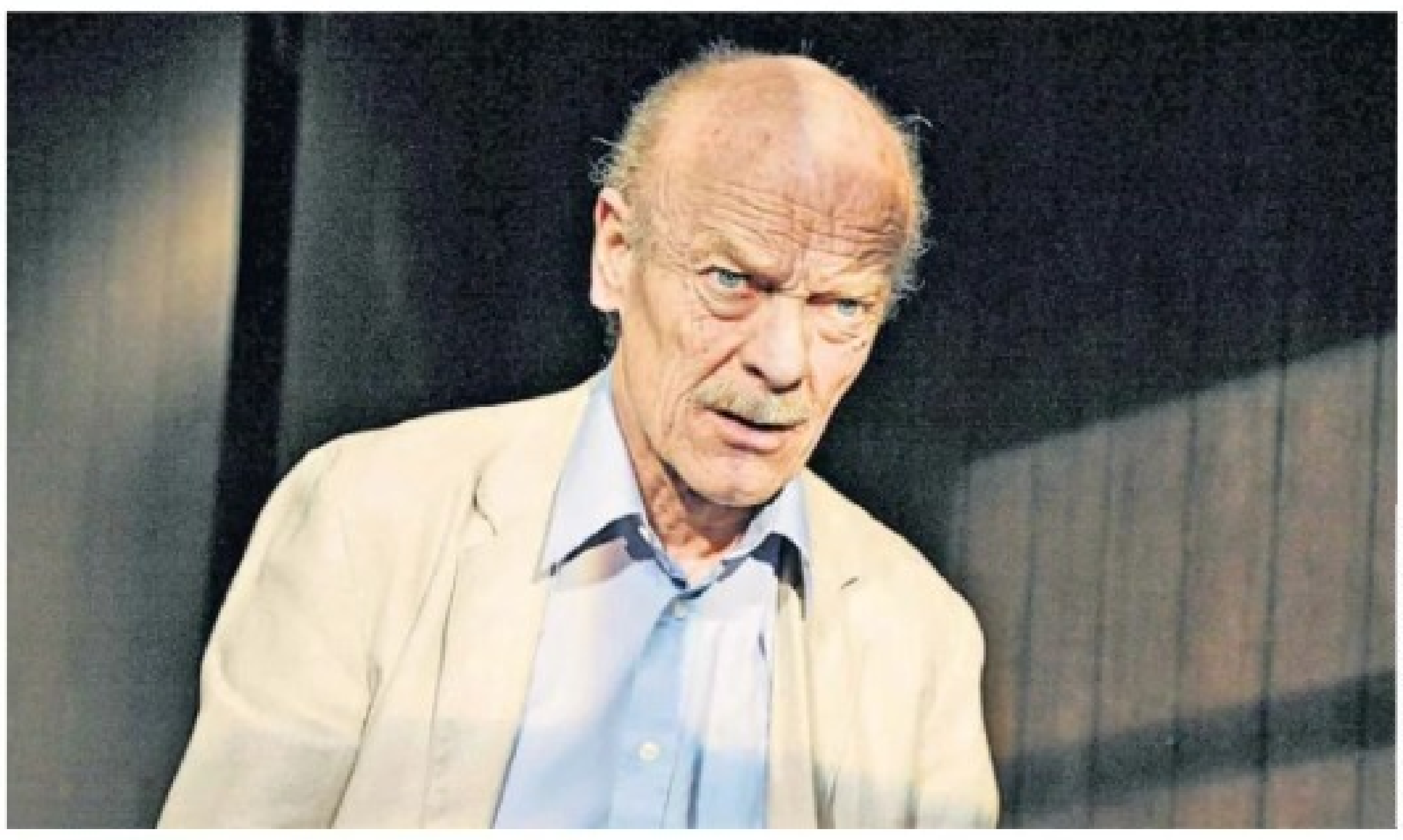
From his apartment in Rome, packed with old 78s, faded photographs and meticulously copied arias, Aspinall wrote scholarly articles about Rossini's vocal ornamentation. He also presented record recitals of famous singers of the past and contributed essays for re-issues of old recordings.

In the late 1990s he moved to a palazzo in Naples, where he baked elaborate cakes and pastries, and joined a Gospel reading circle. "It is very important to me to sing, and I have found a way in which I can," he said. "And people will pay to listen to me."

Michael Aspinall, born October 31 1939, died July 10 2026

Michael Byrne

Imperious actor who specialised in Nazis on screen and played Romeo on stage in his seventies



Byrne, top, in Harold Pinter's *A Slight Ache* (Gate Theatre, 2006), and as Colonel Vogel with Alison Doody as Dr Schneider in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989)

DONALD COOPER/CINEMATIC/ALAMY

MICHAEL BYRNE, who has died aged 86, was an imposing British actor whose imperious mien, disarmingly vivid blue eyes and close-cropped balding skull made him many a director's first choice to play Nazis.

He reached a wide international audience in Steven Spielberg's *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989) as Colonel Vogel, repeatedly thwarted by Indy (Harrison Ford) and his father Henry Jones (Sean Connery) in his efforts to track down the Holy Grail for the Führer.

Byrne delivered one of the film's most memorable moments, when Vogel has captured the Joneses and is leaving them to be disposed of. The blonde Austrian Nazi Elsa Schneider bestows a parting smooch on Indy, telling him: "That's how Austrians say goodbye"; Vogel then adds, "And zis is how we say goodbye in Germany, Dr Jones", before knocking the Joneses' heads together with his swagger stick.

Byrne recognised that the film – which, with its script finessed by Tom Stoppard, was a much more light-hearted affair than the previous two Indiana Jones pictures – appealed as a knockabout comedy. "It's like a pantomime, really, with Sean Connery playing the dame and Harrison being the principal boy," Byrne told *Empire* magazine in 2012.

And yet Byrne, playing it straight, brought a real sense of jeopardy to the film, and audiences cheered the scene in which Vogel falls screaming to his doom as his tank goes over a cliff.

Byrne had already matched wits with Harrison Ford when he played the German commander Major Schroeder in *Force 10 from Navarone* (1978), capturing Ford along with Robert Shaw and Edward Fox as they hunt for a Nazi spy. Other Nazis in his repertoire were Feldwebel Karl Hofer in *The Eagle Has Landed* (1976), Reinhard Beck in *The Scarlet and the Black* (1983), General Olbricht in the television film *The Plot to Kill Hitler* (1990) and Odilo Globocnik in a BBC radio version of Robert Harris's *Fatherland* (1997).

He was also the Charterhouse-educated Gestapo officer being made to feel inferior by Peter O'Toole's Old Etonian Sir Robert even as he removes his fingernails, in Frederic Raphael's adaptation of *Rogue Male* (1976).

Even in roles that did not require a German accent, Byrne tended towards the villainous. In *Braveheart* (1996) he was the English soldier Smythe, who plays a role in provoking the rebellion led by William Wallace (Mel Gibson) by attempting to rape his wife; and he was the "dark wizard" Gellert Grindelwald in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 1* (2010).

Nevertheless, Byrne was also perfectly cast as Ted Page, an amiable old sweetheart he played in *Coronation Street* from 2008 to 2010. Ted, despite being gay, was the long-lost father of the veteran Street resident Gail Platt (Helen Worth), who had resulted from a teenage experimentation with the flighty Audrey (Sue Nicholls). The genial, erudite Ted formed a warm friendship with the would-be culture vulture Ken Barlow (William Roache), prompting Ken's mother-in-law Blanche (Maggie Jones) to accuse them of having an illicit affair.

Byrne was on more familiar rebarbative form in *The Archers* between 2016 and 2023, managing to make listeners feel some sympathy for the villainous abuser Rob Titchener (Timothy Watson) in his role as Bruce, Rob's bullying father. "Bruce (perfectly caught by Michael Byrne) is a man we can all safely detest," enthused the *Telegraph*'s Gillian Reynolds.

Michael Byrne was born in Hampstead on November 7 1939 to Helen Byrne, a single mother; she was a cook who had emigrated to London from Kilkenny. After training at the Central School of Speech and Drama, he joined Laurence Olivier's inaugural National Theatre company at the Old Vic in 1963.

In 1967 *The Daily Telegraph* hailed "an excellent performance from Michael Byrne as an intense young Claudio" in Franco Zeffirelli's production of *Much Ado about Nothing*, which starred the husband-and-wife team Robert Stephens and Maggie Smith as Benedick and Beatrice and was filmed for the BBC.

When he appeared in *The Seagull* at Leatherhead in 1969, *The Sunday Telegraph*'s critic declared: "I have never seen a more intelligent and plausible Konstantin than Michael Byrne's." In 1971 he originated the role of Reg Nuttall in Simon Gray's *Butley* (Criterion).

Among the other highlights during his long stage career were his Polonius opposite Alan Rickman's Hamlet (Riverside Studios, 1992), Roberto Miranda to Juliet Stevenson's Paulina in *Death and the Maiden* (Royal Court and Duke of York's, 1991-92), and the hapless Charles Bovary – "as sympathetic as he is ineffective", judged the *Telegraph* – with Helen Mirren as his wife in Edna O'Brien's adaptation of *Madame Bovary* (Watford Palace, 1987).

In the cinema, Byrne appeared as an artist painting a mysterious young man in Michael Armstrong's surreal two-hander *The Image* (1969); the sitter was David Bowie in his first film role. Other film parts included Edward Seymour in *Henry VIII and His Six Wives*, Lt-Col Giles Vandeleur in *A Bridge Too Far*, Admiral Kelly in the Bond film *Tomorrow Never Dies* and the newspaperman Horace Greeley in *Gangs of New York*. He also appeared in *The Omen*, *The Medusa Touch*, *Apt Pupil*, *The Sum of All Fears* and *Quartet*.

On television he was Crown Prince Friedrich of Prussia ("Fritz"), brother-in-law of Timothy West's "Bertie", in *Edward VII* (ITV, 1975), and Richard the Lionheart in *The Devil's Crown* (BBC Two, 1978). He played Peter Guillam, legman to George Smiley (Alec Guinness), in John le Carré's *Smiley's People* (BBC Two, 1982) and had guest roles in *Z Cars*, *Secret Army*, *Yes, Prime Minister*, *Sharpe*, *Midsomer Murders* and *Strike*.

Rarely cast as a romantic lead in his youth, Byrne was delighted in 2010 to play Romeo at the Bristol Old Vic opposite the 76-year-old Siân Phillips as Juliet and other superannuated actors, in Tom Morris's riff on Shakespeare set in a care home. "I was especially moved by Michael Byrne, who plays Romeo like some old-school, rheumy-eyed poet, blessed with a rapt sense of wonder and with a delicious rueful humour about him," was Charles Spencer's verdict in the *Telegraph*.

His last stage roles were as Talbot in Robert Icke's revival of *Mary Stuart* (Duke of York's, 2018) and Serebryakov in Rupert Everett's production of *Uncle Vanya* (Theatre Royal, Bath, 2019).

A clubbable companion and a lifelong Arsenal supporter, Byrne believed passionately in the power of the arts as a force for good, and was remembered by his daughter Bryony for "his habit of gently – and sometimes not so gently – pushing both himself and those around him to think bigger, reach further and embrace life more fully".

Michael Byrne married the actress Carole Nimmons in 1965; although they were separated, she cared for him in his last years. She survives him with their two daughters.

Michael Byrne, born November 7 1939, died June 20 2026

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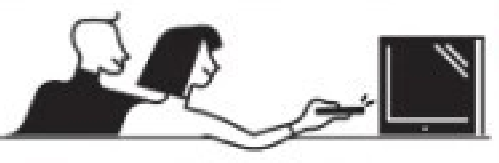


EXTRAORDINARY EXTENSIONS

Channel 4, 8pm

Rap star Tinie Tempah is a warm host on extensions revamp show, though he says 'Wow' a lot

A welcome return of the property show presented by Tinie Tempah, a sort of *Grand Designs* where the homeowners unleash their inner architect to design high-budget and striking extensions.

The rapper's enthusiasm for the subject (he is also an entrepreneur with an extensive property portfolio) and his warmth in dealing with people pimping their places is evident – even if he does say "wow" a lot. But then, it's probably what viewers say when they hear the large sums being spent or see an occasional bizarre addition to what appears to be a perfectly nice home.

Tempah starts with two ambitious creations: he meets Art Deco obsessives Chris and Nadine as they transform their west London mid-terrace home into a *Great Gatsby*-inspired 1920s palace. It is, Tempah says, a chance to express that aesthetic on a grand scale, or as Nadine modestly puts it: "an avant-garde ode to history". On the Norfolk Broads, meanwhile, Tempah meets James and Jenny, whose 275-year-old cottage no longer meets their family's needs, so they are adding an "eco-extension" using only natural, recycled or reused materials.

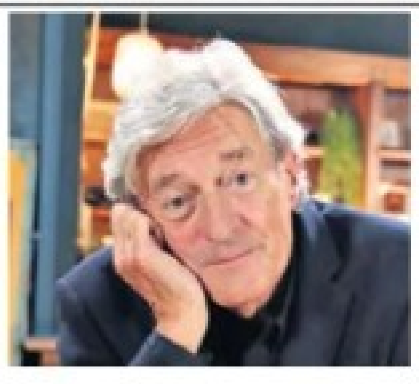
Very good for their green credentials, but will the new build detract from the chocolate-box-pretty old one? ***Veronica Lee***

The Idaho Murders: College Nightmare

Netflix

When an experienced police officer describes a crime scene as "absolutely horrific", you can guess that what follows in this three-part documentary series, about four University of Idaho students who roomed together and were found stabbed in their beds in November 2022, is shocking.

Director Skye Borgman uses police footage, news archive and interviews with the victims' families and friends to tell their story – and how the murderer was found.



Auction host Nigel Havers is his usual charming self

The Bidding Room

BBC One, 3.45pm

Nigel Havers charmingly teases out the stories behind auction items that include an enamel advertising sign, a Second World War gas rattle and a Murano glass toucan.

Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts

Channel 5, 8pm

More medical heroics from the team in the accident and emergency department at Barnsley Hospital in South Yorkshire. We meet 71-year-old Enid, who's struggling to breathe after recovering from pneumonia, while at the other end of the age scale, a toddler has managed to get a conker stuck up their nose.

Katie Price: Nothing to Hide

Sky Documentaries, 9pm

"I really would like to get to the bottom of her," the long-suffering mother of the former glamour model turned reality TV star says about her daughter's turbulent life. Sadly, as the series concludes, she is no nearer understanding what makes Price tick.

My Floating Home

More4, 9pm

This delightful series about those who live in homes on the water concludes with Mark Evans meeting Nigel and Tina, who need a vessel with a quiet engine to keep their dog calm, which means commissioning a fully electric narrowboat. ***VL***

FILM

Eye in the Sky (2015)

BBC One, 10.40pm

★★★★

Gavin Hood's drone warfare thriller focuses on a shanty town in Nairobi, where suicide bombers may or may not be ensconced. Helen Mirren's British Army colonel calls the shots from afar, while Alan Rickman, in his final screen performance, stars as a hawkish British general. The arguments – to strike, or not to strike – zing back and forth in Westminster and the film's serious intent becomes entirely honourable.

Helen Mirren directs affairs from afar in drone thriller

The Day the Earth Stood Still (2008)

Film4, 6.55pm

★★★

In a rehash of the 1951 sci-fi classic which fails to replicate the weird Cold War poetry of the original, Keanu Reeves plays an alien called Klaatu who lands in Central Park on a mission to decide if humanity should be allowed to survive, given that it's made such a mess of the planet. Mankind's sole hope is glum scientist Jennifer Connelly...

Main channels

BBC One

6.00 am Breakfast (S) **9.30** Animal Park (AD) (R) (S) **10.15** Trace, Track, Get My Car Back (R) (S) **10.45** Expert Witness (R) (S) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (AD) (R) (S)
12.15 pm Bargain Hunt (R) (S)
1.00 BBC News at One; Weather (S)
1.35 Regional News; Weather (S)
1.45 BBC News at One; Weather (S)
2.00 Money for Nothing (S)
2.45 Escape to the Country (R) (S)
3.45 The Bidding Room (S)
4.30 The Travelling Auctioneers (AD) (R) (S)
5.15 Pointless (R) (S)
6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather (S)
6.30 Regional News; Weather (S)

Murder 24/7

7.00 The One Show Presented by Alex Jones and Vernon Kay (S)

7.30 EastEnders Gray continues to manipulate Sheila (AD) (S)

8.00 The Repair Shop The experts restore a mandriola, two small rattan chairs from Tanzania, a pilot's cap and a pinball machine (AD) (R) (S)

9.00 Murder 24/7 The investigation into the fatal stabbing of Cheryl McKenna in Worcestershire in 2024 (AD) (S)

10.00 BBC News at Ten (S)
10.30 Regional News; Weather (S)
10.40 FILM: Eye in the Sky (2015) Thriller starring Helen Mirren (S)

12.15 am The Hit List Celebrity Special **1.05 - 6.00am** News

BBC Two

6.30 am Money for Nothing (R) (S) **7.15** The Bidding Room (R) (S) **8.00** Sign Zone: Great Japanese Railway Journeys (AD) (R) (S) (SL) **8.30** Sign Zone: Great Continental Railway Journeys (AD) (R) (S) (SL) **9.00** News (S)
1.00 pm Richard Osman's House of Games (R) (S)
1.30 The Finish Line (R) (S)
2.15 Lightning (R) (S)
2.45 The Hairy Bikers' Bakeation (AD) (R) (S)
3.45 The Farmers' Country Showdown (R) (S)
4.15 Earth from Space (AD) (R) (S)
5.15 Flog It! (R) (S)
6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games (R) (S)
6.30 Just One Thing (AD) (R) (S)

Lucy Worsley Investigates

7.00 Celebrity Antiques Road Trip John Bercow and Sally Gunnell take on the challenge (R) (S)

8.00 Saving Lives at Sea The Newhaven crew make a desperate attempt to rescue a yachtsman (AD) (R) (S)

9.00 The Gunpowder Plot: Lucy Worsley Investigates Investigating the plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament (AD) (R) (S)

10.00 Inside No 9 Alan arrives to teach at a small school in rural Wales, but finds himself overshadowed (AD) (R) (S)
10.30 Newsnight (S)

11.00 Uncanny **12.00** The Devil in the Family: The Fall of Ruby Franke **12.55am** Sign Zone: Do You Know Your Place? **1.25** Sign Zone: Scamanda **2.05** Sign Zone: The Rapture **3.05 - 6.30am** This Is BBC Two

ITV1

6.00 am Good Morning Britain (S) **10.00** This Morning (S)
1.00 pm News (S)
1.20 ITV News London; Weather (S)
1.30 ITV Racing: Glorious Goodwood Coverage of day two of the meeting, including the Sussex Stakes (S)
4.30 Tipping Point: Best Ever Finals (R) (S)
5.00 The Chase (R) (S)
6.00 ITV News London; Weather (S)
6.30 News (S)

Coronation Street

7.30 Deal or No Deal: Banker's Best Battles Stephen Mulhern looks back at the battles between Claire and Leon and the Banker (S)

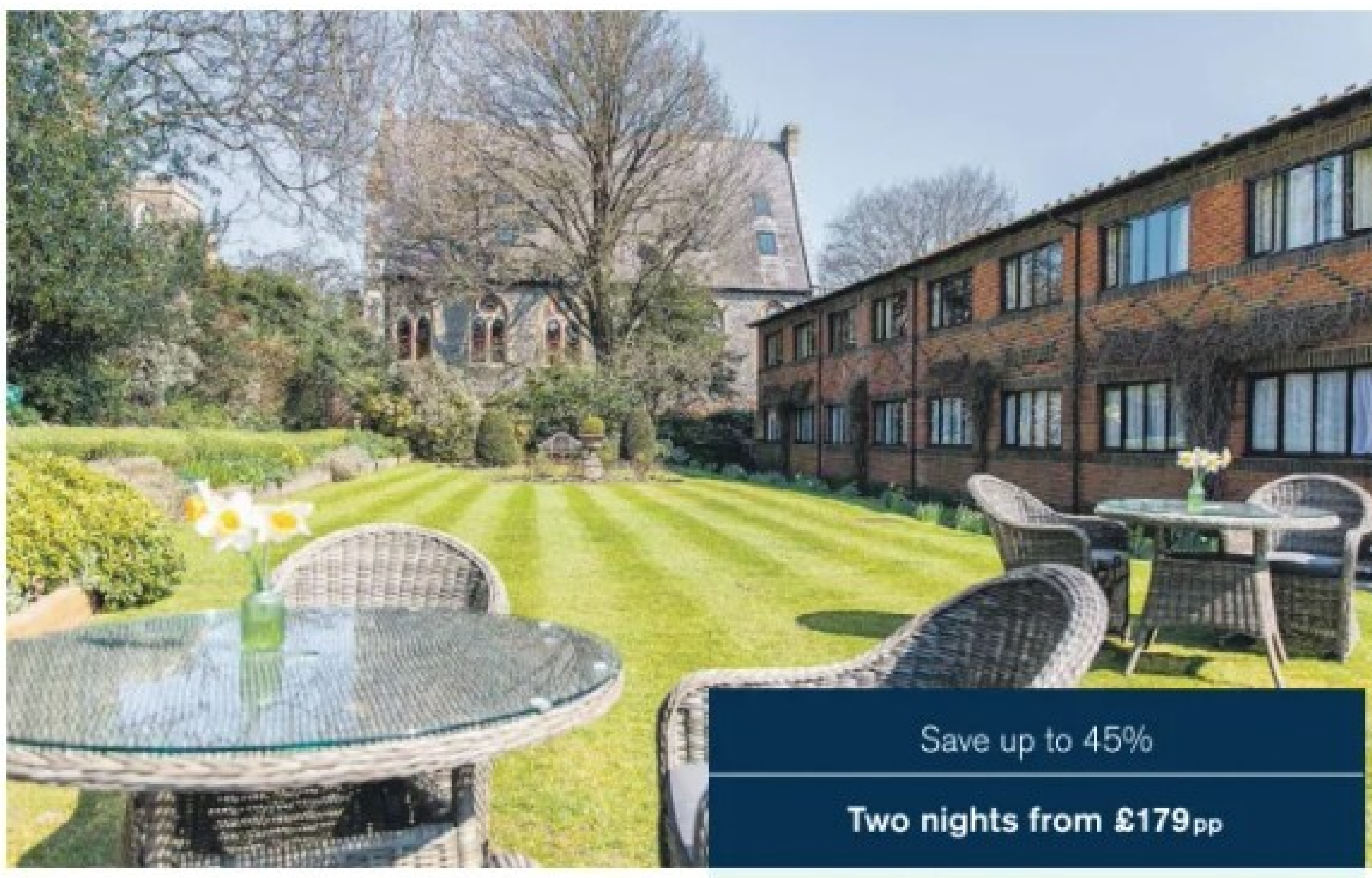
8.00 Emmerdale Joe unsettles everyone with an impromptu lunch (AD) (S)

8.30 Coronation Street A family celebration for Ross's birthday proves too much for Cassie to bear (AD) (S)

9.00 Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Big-prize quiz, hosted by Jeremy Clarkson (R) (S)

10.00 News (S)
10.30 ITV News London; Weather (S)
10.45 FILM: Live and Let Die (1973) James Bond spy adventure starring Roger Moore (AD) (S)

1.05 am Shop on TV **3.00** Love & Death **4.00** Inside the Langham: Britain's First Grand Hotel **4.25** Unwind with ITV **5.35 - 6.00am** Tom Kerridge Cooks Italy



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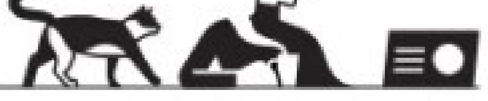

RGS Presents: The Future of Exploration, with Tim Marshal

YouTube, 7pm

An opportunity to join live and for free, via the society's YouTube channel (and, shortly after, on all major podcast platforms), this Royal Geographical Society event looking at the frontiers of modern exploration. Host Matt Pycroft's guest is Tim Marshall, author of the successful *Prisoners of Geography*, whose work reveals how geography shapes politics, power, and history. Meanwhile, don't miss **The Folk Show with Michael Sheen** (*Radio 2, 9pm*). Sitting in for Mark Radcliffe this week is none other than actor and force of nature Michael Sheen. ***Gerard O'Donovan***

RADIO 1

FM 97.6-99.8MHZ

6.58am Newsbeat **7.00** Radio 1 Breakfast with Greg James **10.30** Newsbeat **11.00** Rickie, Melvin and Charlie **12.45pm** Newsbeat **1.00** Matt and Jerry **3.30** Newsbeat **3.33** Going Home with Vick, Katie and Jamie on Radio 1 **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Radio 1's New Music Show with Jack Saunders **8.00** Radio 1's Future Pop with Jodie Bryant **10.00** Radio 1's Power Down Playlist with Sian Eleri **11.00** Benji B **1.00am** Radio 1 Dance Presents **2.00** Radio 1 Anthems **4.00** Radio 1 Pop Anthems **5.00 - 6.58am** Radio 1 Early Breakfast with Dean McCullough

RADIO 2

FM 88-90.2MHZ

6.30am The Sara Cox Breakfast Show **9.30** Vernon Kay **12.00** Jeremy Vine. Current affairs chat **2.00pm** DJ Spoony. Sitting in for Trevor Nelson **4.00** Angela Scanlon. Angela presents drivetime news, views and music **7.00** Jo Whiley's Shiny Happy Playlist. Jo plays her favourite album tracks and musical gems rarely heard on Radio 2 **7.30** Jo Whiley. Music and chat **9.00** The Folk Show with Michael Sheen. The actor sits in to share his love of folk and acoustic music **10.00** The Good Groove with Melvin Odoom. Sitting in for Spoony **12.00** OJ Borg **3.00am** Sounds of the 90s with Fearne Cotton **4.00 - 6.30am** Owain Wyn Evans

RADIO 3

FM 90.2-92.4MHZ

6.30am Breakfast **9.30** Essential Classics **1.00pm** Classical Live **3.00** Choral Evensong **4.00** Composer of the Week: Alice Mary Smith **5.00** In Tune **7.00** BBC Proms 2026. The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra perform Elgar, Weir and Dean **10.00** Night Tracks **11.30** 'Round Midnight **12.30 - 6.30am** Through the Night

RADIO 4

FM 92.4-94.6MHZ; LW 198KHZ

6.00am Today **9.00** Sideways **9.30** Breakin' the Cycle **10.00** Woman's Hour **11.00** Floor 15 **11.40** This Week in History **11.45** Book of the Week: Confessions of a Performative Male **12.00** News **12.04pm** You and Yours **12.57** Weather **1.00** The World at One **1.45** Dead Rabbit **2.00** The Archers. There's an awkward moment for Alice **2.15** Drama: United Kingdoms. Compilation of five short plays on the theme of Sheltering **3.00** Money Box **3.30** A Map of the Moon. Siddharth Khajuria examines maps of the moon **4.00** The Power of Guilt. Dave struggles to face up to what he's done **4.15** The Media Show **5.00** PM **5.57** Weather **6.00** Six O'Clock News **6.30** Best Medicine. New series. Kiri Pritchard-McLean and guests celebrate medicine **7.00** The Archers. Chris takes things too far **7.15** Front Row **8.00** AntiSocial **8.45** Café Hope **9.00** Invisible Hands **9.30** Inside Health **9.59** Weather **10.00** The World Tonight **10.45** Wild Dark Shore **11.00** Sunil Patel: An Idiot's Guide to Living Forever **11.15** Follow the Rabbit **11.30** A Good Read **12.00** News and Weather **12.30am** Book of the Week: Confessions of a Performative Male **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.00** As World Service **5.00** News Summary **5.04** Sideways **5.32** Weather **5.34** Shipping Forecast **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45 - 6.00am** Farming Today

RADIO 5 LIVE

MW 693 & 909KHZ

6.00am 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **11.00** Naga Munchetty **2.00pm** Matt Chorley **4.00** 5 Live Drive **7.00** Glasgow 2026. Eleanor Oldroyd presents commentary on day six of the Commonwealth Games, with swimming and athletics **10.00** Qasa Alom **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo **5.00 - 6.00am** Wake Up to Money

CLASSIC FM

FM 99.9-101.9MHZ

6.30am Classic FM Breakfast with Dan Walker **9.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame Hour with Dan Walker **10.00** Aled Jones **1.00pm** Anne-Marie Minhall **4.00** Margherita Taylor **7.00** Relaxing Evenings with Zeb Soanes. Join Zeb for an evening of the most relaxing music **9.00** Classic FM's Composer Carousel With Zeb Soanes. Today's focus is Italian composer and pianist, Ludovico Einaudi **10.00** Calm Classics **1.00am** Bill Overton **4.00 - 6.30am** Early Breakfast

WORLD SERVICE

DIGITAL ONLY

8.00am News **8.06** The Interview **8.30** Business Daily **8.50** Witness History **9.00** The Newsroom **9.30** The Climate Question **10.00** News **10.06** The Documentary: Driving Across The Divide **11.00** The Newsroom **11.30** The Global Story **12.00** News **12.06pm** Outlook **12.50** Witness History **1.00** The Newsroom **1.30** The Documentary: How Did We Get Here: Israel and the Palestinians **2.00** Newshour **3.00** News **3.06** The Interview **3.30** Business Daily **3.50** World Business Express **4.00** BBC OS **6.00** News **6.06** Outlook **6.50** Witness History **7.00** The Newsroom **7.30** Sport Today **8.00** News **8.06** The Climate Question **8.30** Health Check **9.00** Newshour **10.00** News **10.06** The Interview **10.30** The Documentary: How Did We Get Here: Israel and the Palestinians **11.00** The Newsroom **11.30** World Business Report **12.00** News **12.06am** The Documentary: Driving Across The Divide **1.00** The Newsroom **1.30** The Global Story **2.00** The Newsroom **2.30** The Documentary: The Battle That Changed Ireland **3.00** News **3.06** Outlook **3.50** Witness History **4.00** The Newsroom **4.30** The Food Chain **5.00 - 8.00am** Newsday

RADIO 4 EXTRA

DIGITAL ONLY

6.00am Raffles **6.30** Charles Paris: A Deadly Habit **7.00** After Henry **7.30** The Missing Hancocks **8.00** Bridget Christie: Mortal **8.30** Sounds Like London: 100 Years of Black Music in the Capital **8.45** Small Island **9.00** Ivo Graham's Obsessions **9.30** The Time of My Life **9.45** Daily Service **10.00** The Documentary: British Music's Caribbean Roots **10.50** Witness History **11.00** Raffles **11.30** Charles Paris: A Deadly Habit **12.00** After Henry **12.30pm** The Missing Hancocks **1.00** Bridget Christie: Mortal **1.30** Sounds Like London: 100 Years of Black Music in the Capital **1.45** Small Island **2.00** The Write Stuff **2.30** Bristow **3.00** The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency **3.45** The Phoenix and the Carpet **4.00** The Documentary: British Music's Caribbean Roots **4.50** Witness History **5.00** Raffles **5.30** Charles Paris: A Deadly Habit **6.00** After Henry **6.30** The Missing Hancocks **7.00** Bridget Christie: Mortal **7.30** Sounds Like London: 100 Years of Black Music in the Capital **7.45** Small Island. Pat Cumper's dramatisation of Andrea Levy's novel **8.00** The Write Stuff **8.30** Bristow **9.00** The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency. By Alexander McCall Smith **9.45** The Phoenix and the Carpet **10.00** Ivo Graham's Obsessions **10.30** Mitch Benn's Crimes Against Music **11.00** Dave Podmore's Cricket Night **11.30** Dial M for Pizza **12.00** The Documentary: British Music's Caribbean Roots **12.50am** Witness History **1.00** Raffles **1.30** Charles Paris: A Deadly Habit **2.00** After Henry **2.30** The Missing Hancocks **3.00** Bridget Christie: Mortal **3.30** Sounds Like London: 100 Years of Black Music in the Capital **3.45** Small Island **4.00** The Write Stuff **4.30** Bristow **5.00** The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency **5.45 - 6.00am** The Phoenix and the Carpet

Today's television

FV Freeview **FS** Freesat **(AD)** Audio description **(R)** Repeat **(S)** Subtitles **(SL)** In-vision signing

Channel 4

6.25 am Cheers (R) (S) **6.50** Cheers (R) (S) **7.15** Cheers (R) (S) **7.45** Everybody Loves Raymond (AD) (R) (S) **8.10** Everybody Loves Raymond (AD) (R) (S) **8.40** Everybody Loves Raymond (AD) (R) (S) **9.10** Frasier (AD) (R) (S) **9.40** Frasier (AD) (R) (S) **10.10** Frasier (AD) (R) (S) **10.40** Frasier (AD) (R) (S) **11.10** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (R) (S)
12.05 pm Channel 4 News (S)
12.10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It (AD) (R) (S)
1.10 The Great House Giveaway (R) (S)
2.10 Countdown (S)
3.00 A Place in the Sun (R) (S)
4.00 Narrow Escapes (AD) (R) (S)
5.00 Chateau DIY (AD) (R) (S)
6.00 American Pickers (AD) (R) (S)

The Undeclared War

7.00 Channel 4 News (S)

8.00 Extraordinary Extensions New series. A couple transform their west London home into a Great Gatsby-inspired palace (AD) (S)

9.00 The Undeclared War Danny is worried about Barbara's erratic behaviour (AD) (S)

10.00 24 Hours in A&E Sara has serious head and chest injuries (AD) (R) (S)

11.05 24 Hours in A&E **12.05am** Murder Case: The Digital Detectives **1.00** Dover 24/7: Britain's Busiest Port **1.55** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **2.50** Britain's Most Expensive Houses **3.45** Grand Designs **4.40** Couples Come Dine with Me **5.35** Sunday Brunch **5.45 - 6.25am** Countdown

Channel 5

6.00 am Milkshake! **9.15** Jeremy Vine (S) **11.30** Storm & Alexis (S)
12.45 pm 5 News at Lunchtime (S)
12.50 Matt Allwright (S)
2.20 FILM: Memories of Murder (2023, TVM) Thriller inspired by true events, starring Andrea Bogart (S)
4.00 Castle (R) (S)
4.55 Love Nature (R) (S)
5.00 5 News with Dan Walker (S)
6.00 Malta: The Jewel of the Med (R) (S)
6.55 5 News Update (S)

Car Pound Cops

7.00 Car Pound Cops A quad-bike rider is flagged down in Surrey (R) (S)

7.55 5 News Update (S)

8.00 Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts Paramedics rush in 71-year-old struggling to breathe (S)

9.00 The Crow Girl As Jeanette manages the fallout from Lou's actions, Victoria seeks revenge. Last in the series (AD) (S)

10.00 Commonwealth Games 2026 Highlights from the sixth day (S)

11.05 Cause of Death **12.05am** A&E After Dark **1.00** Cruise TV with LoveitBookit **2.00** Shoplifters: Catch Me If You Can **2.50** Malta: The Jewel of the Med **3.45** Friends **4.10** Friends **4.35** The Highland Vet **5.25** Entertainment News on 5 **5.35** Milo **5.45 - 6.00am** The Adventures of Paddington

Sky Arts

FV 36 **FS** 143 **SKY** 822 **VIRGIN** 123

6.00 am Jacqueline du Pré: Genius and Tragedy (S) **7.55** The Joy of Painting (AD) (S) **8.30** The Joy of Painting (AD) (S) **9.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) (S) **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) (S) **10.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents (S) **10.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents (S) **11.00** Discovering: Walter Matthau (AD) (S)
12.00 The Movies (S)
1.00 pm Tales of the Unexpected (AD) (S)
1.30 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) (S)
2.00 The Alfred Hitchcock Hour (S)
3.00 The Seventies (AD) (S)
4.00 Discovering: Shirley MacLaine (AD) (S)
5.00 Portrait Artist of the Year 2021 (AD) (S)
6.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) (S)
6.30 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) (S)

Alec Guinness: A Class Act

7.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents A college student believes that a professor has murdered his wife (S)

7.30 Alfred Hitchcock Presents A young woman witnesses a murder (S)

8.00 Alec Guinness: A Class Act A look at the career of the actor through the words of his family and friends who knew and worked with him, as well as archive interviews with Guinness (S)

10.00 The Eighties The impact of the emergence of Aids (AD) (S)

11.00 Classic Albums **12.20am** FILM: Midnight Movies: From the Margin to the Mainstream (2005) Documentary celebrating six cult films **2.10** FILM: I Am Bruce Lee (2011) The life and career of the actor and martial artist **4.10** The Art of the Garden **5.05 - 6.00am** The Movies

U&Drama

FV 20 **FS** 158 **SKY** 143 **VIRGIN** 116

6.00 am Teleshopping **7.20** The Bill (S) **8.15** Doctors (S) **8.50** Doctors (S) **9.30** Classic Holby City (S) **10.45** Casualty (AD) (S) **11.45** The Bill (S)
12.50 pm Classic EastEnders (S)
1.25 Classic EastEnders (S)
2.00 Neighbours (S)
2.30 Neighbours (S)
3.00 Pie in the Sky (S)
4.05 Lovejoy (S)
5.20 Waiting for God (S)
6.00 Last of the Summer Wine (S)
6.40 Last of the Summer Wine (S)

The Chelsea Detective

7.20 Last of the Summer Wine Pearl throws Howard out of the house (S)

8.00 Sister Boniface Mysteries A death occurs at a local talent show (AD) (S)

9.00 The Chelsea Detective A psychotherapist is murdered during a video call (AD) (S)

10.00 New Tricks Brian enters an addiction centre run by monks (AD) (S)

11.00 Silent Witness **1.35am** Lovejoy **2.30** Waiting for God **3.00** Darby and Joan **4.00 - 6.00am** Teleshopping

Talking Pictures TV

FV 82 **FS** 306 **SKY** 324 **VIRGIN** 445

6.00 am FILM: Suspected Person (1942, b/w) Crime drama starring Clifford Evans (S) **7.35** FILM: Saloon Bar (1940, b/w) Mystery starring Gordon Harker (S) **9.05** FILM: Nowhere to Go (1958) Thriller starring George Nader and Maggie Smith (S) **11.05** FILM: Shepherd on the Rock (1993) Drama starring Bernard Hill (S)
1.00 pm The Buccaneers (S)
1.30 FILM: Send for Paul Temple (1946, b/w) Mystery starring Anthony Hulme and Joy Shelton (S)
3.10 Dial 999 (S)
3.40 FILM: Heavens Above! (1963, b/w) Satirical comedy with Peter Sellers, Eric Sykes and Brock Peters (S)
6.00 Dial 999 (S)
6.30 Give Us a Clue (S)

Heavens Above!

7.00 Out of Town How a community came together to save the chalk streams that feed it (S)

7.30 Travelling Man Lomax becomes a suspect in a rustling case (S)

8.35 FILM: The Reckless Moment (1949, b/w) Drama starring James Mason, Joan Bennett, Geraldine Brooks and Shepperd Strudwick (S)

10.15 FILM: The Anderson Tapes (1971) Thriller starring Sean Connery (S)

12.15 am FILM: Cactus Flower (1969) Romantic comedy starring Walter Matthau **2.20** FILM: Warp Speed (1981, TVM) Sci-fi mystery starring Camille Mitchell **4.00** Stagecoach West **5.00 - 6.00am** The Rogues

Film4

FV 14 **FS** 300 **SKY** 855 **VIRGIN** 428

11.00 am FILM: Destroyer (1943, b/w) Wartime drama starring Edward G Robinson and Glenn Ford (S)
1.05 pm FILM: The Mouse That Roared (1959) Comedy starring Peter Sellers and Jean Seberg (AD) (S)
2.45 Independence Day: Resurgence Interview Special
2.50 FILM: The Violent Men (1955) Western starring Edward G Robinson and Barbara Stanwyck (S)
4.45 FILM: Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea (1961) Sci-fi adventure starring Walter Pidgeon (S)

The Florida Project

6.55 FILM: The Day the Earth Stood Still (2008) An alien is sent to Earth on a mission to decide if the human race should be wiped out or allowed to continue existing. Sci-fi remake starring Keanu Reeves and Jennifer Connelly (AD) (S)

9.00 FILM: The Florida Project (2017) A six-year-old girl roams the grounds of the motel where she lives, looking for adventure with her small band of friends. Drama starring Willem Dafoe, Brooklynn Prince, Valeria Cotto and Christopher Rivera (S)

11.15 FILM: Pearl (2022) Horror starring Mia Goth and David Corenswet **1.20 - 3.40am** FILM: Minari (2020) Romantic drama starring Steven Yeun

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BBC Four

FV 9 **FS** 173 **SKY** 116 **VIRGIN** 108

7.00 pm Great British Railway Journeys
7.30 Walking with Jim Moir
8.00 The Treasures of Ancient Rome
9.00 Caligula with Mary Beard
10.00 Sir Derek Jacobi Remembers – I, Claudius
10.15 I, Claudius
11.55 I, Claudius
12.45 am The Treasures of Ancient Rome
1.45 Caligula with Mary Beard
2.45 Great British Railway Journeys
3.15 - 3.45am Walking with Jim Moir

ITV3

FV 10 **FS** 115 **SKY** 119 **VIRGIN** 117

11.20 am Heartbeat
12.25 pm Heartbeat
1.30 Midsomer Murders
3.30 Classic Emmerdale
4.05 Classic Emmerdale
4.40 Classic Coronation Street
5.15 Classic Coronation Street
5.50 Heartbeat
6.55 Heartbeat
8.00 Midsomer Murders
10.00 Grantchester
11.00 Grantchester
11.50 Trial & Retribution
1.25 am Wycliffe
2.25 Unwind with ITV
2.30 - 6.00am Teleshopping

ITV4

FV 26 **FS** 117 **SKY** 120 **VIRGIN** 118

11.20 am Robin of Sherwood
12.25 pm Magnum, PI
1.30 Magnum, PI
2.35 Dempsey and Makepeace
3.45 Boon
4.50 The Professionals
5.55 Minder
7.00 King of the Roads
8.00 Goodwood Festival of Speed
9.00 FILM: The Long Good Friday (1980) Thriller starring Bob Hoskins
11.25 All Elite Wrestling: Collision
1.15 am BattleBots
2.15 River Monsters
2.40 Unwind with ITV
3.00 Teleshopping
3.30 - 4.00am Motorsport Mundial

More4

FV 18 **FS** 124 **SKY** 136 **VIRGIN** 147

11.35 am Four in a Bed
12.10 pm Four in a Bed
12.40 Come Dine with Me
3.20 Four in a Bed
5.50 George Clarke's Old House, New Home
6.55 Location, Location, Location
7.55 Grand Designs
9.00 My Floating Home
10.00 24 Hours in Police Custody: Murder Is No Game
11.30 24 Hours in Police Custody: Murder Is No Game
12.30 am 999: On the Front Line
1.30 24 Hours in Police Custody: Murder Is No Game
3.00 - 4.00am 24 Hours in Police Custody: Murder Is No Game

U&Gold

SKY 110 **VIRGIN** 124

11.40 am Dad
12.20 pm Only Fools and Horses
1.00 Keeping Up Appearances
1.40 Dad's Army
2.20 The Green Green Grass
3.00 Are You Being Served?
3.40 Dad
4.20 Dad's Army
5.00 Last of the Summer Wine
6.20 Keeping Up Appearances
7.00 Porridge
7.40 Dad's Army
8.20 Are You Being Served?
9.00 The Office
9.40 Porridge
10.20 Not Going Out
11.00 Mrs Brown's Boys
11.40 Colin's Sandwich
12.20 -1.00am The Office

U&Yesterday

FV 27 **FS** 159 **SKY** 155 **VIRGIN** 129

Noon Antiques Roadshow
1.00 pm Antiques Roadshow
2.00 Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics
3.00 Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics
4.00 Secret Nazi Bases
5.00 World War Two from Above
6.00 Antiques Roadshow
7.00 Asia
8.00 Explore
9.00 Simon Reeve's South America
10.00 Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics
12.00 Bangers & Cash
1.00 am Find It, Fix It, Flog It
2.00 Great British Railway Journeys
3.00 - 6.10am Teleshopping

Sky Atlantic

SKY 108

11.15 am The White Lotus
12.20 pm Homicide: Life on the Street
1.15 Homicide: Life on the Street
2.10 Billions
3.05 Billions
4.10 The White Lotus
5.40 Task
6.50 The Gilded Age
7.55 The Gilded Age
9.00 House of the Dragon
10.15 Station Eleven
11.15 Station Eleven
12.15 am The White Lotus
1.25 The White Lotus
3.05 - 4.10am Billions

U&Dave

11.20am Yukon Gold **12.20pm** Top Gear **2.20** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **3.00** Robson Green: World's Most Amazing Walks **4.00** Rick Stein's Long Weekends **6.00** The Hairy Bikers: Mums Know Best **7.00** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **7.40** Would I Lie to You? **9.00** QI XL. Extended edition. With guests Josh Widdicombe, Jo Brand and Phill Jupitus **10.00** Have I Got a Bit More News for You. Jo Brand hosts, with panellists Rylan and Robert Peston **11.00** Taskmaster **12.00** Mock the Week **12.40am** Would I Lie to You? **2.00** QI XL **3.00-4.00am** Taskmaster

ITV2

11.20am The Real Housewives of Orange County **12.15pm** Dinner Date **1.15** Supermarket Sweep **2.15** The Floor USA **3.10** The Only Way Is Essex **4.10** The Real Housewives of Salt Lake City **5.00** The Real Housewives of Orange County **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase. Mark Charnock, Kerry Godliman and Janet Street-Porter compete **7.00** The Floor USA. Rob Lowe hosts the American version of the show **8.00** The 1% Club **9.00** The Princess Diaries **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.35am** Bob's Burgers **1.30** G'wed **2.30** Unwind with ITV **3.00-6.00am** Teleshopping

Challenge

Noon Tenable **1.00pm** Family Fortunes **2.00** Bridge of Lies **3.00** The Chase **4.00** Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Celebrity Special **5.00** The Bidding Room **6.00** Tenable **7.00** The Chase Celebrity Special **8.00** The Chase **10.00** The Chase Celebrity Special **11.00** Bullseye **12.00** Bridge of Lies **1.00am** The Chase **2.00-3.00am** The Chase Celebrity Special

Quest

Noon Gem Hunters Down Under **1.00pm** Mike Brewer: Born Dealer **2.00** Shed and Buried **3.00** Shed and Buried: Classic Cars **4.00** Find It, Fix It, Flog It **5.00** The Yorkshire Auction House **7.00** Antiques Road Trip **8.00** The Yorkshire Auction House **9.00** Angus Ashworth: Yorkshire Heritage Hero **10.00** The Repair Shop **11.00** How Do They Do It? **1.00am** Salvage Hunters **3.00-4.00am** Salvage Hunters: The Restorers

Discovery

Noon Building Off the Grid **1.00pm** Dr Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet **3.00** How It's Made **5.00** Alaska: Homestead Rescue **7.00** Last Chance Garage **9.00** Wheeler Dealers **10.00** Mighty Truckers **11.00** The Alaska Triangle **12.00-1.00am** Deadliest Catch

PBS America

11.30am Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery **1.15pm** Horatio's Drive: America's First Road Trip **3.50** Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery **8.50** Horatio's Drive: America's First Road Trip **12.00** Higgins Ridge **2.00-6.00am** Teleshopping

Sky History

Noon Storage Wars **1.00pm** History's Greatest Warriors **2.00** Storage Hunters **6.00** History's Greatest Picks with Mike Wolfe **7.00** Forged in Fire **8.00** Storage Wars **9.00** History's Greatest Warriors **10.00** Kursk: 10 Days That Shaped Putin **11.00** Airport Security: USA **12.00** Storage Hunters **1.50am** Storage Wars **2.50** History's Greatest Warriors **3.40-4.25am** Kursk: 10 Days That Shaped Putin

Sky Documentaries

Noon FILM: Man on Wire (2008) Documentary about a tightrope walk between the World Trade Centre towers **2.00pm** Benetton Formula **4.00** The Directors **5.00** Discovering: Jodie Foster **6.00** House of Kardashian **9.00** Katie Price: Nothing to Hide **10.15** Becoming Madonna **12.15am** Ibiza Narcos **3.15-5.00am** Right to Fight

Sky One

Noon Big Cat Country **1.00pm** Hawaii Five-0 **3.00** S.W.A.T. **5.00** The Simpsons **6.00** Animal Control **7.00** The Simpsons **8.00** A League of Their Own: The Rally. Jamie Redknapp, Jill Scott, Micah Richards and Tom Davis compete in the ALOTO Rally Cup **9.00 FILM:** The Equalizer (2014) An ex-secret agent fights to bring down a crime syndicate after coming to the aid of an abused prostitute. Action thriller with Denzel Washington and Chloe Grace Moretz **11.20** Animal Control **12.20am** Grimm **1.10** The Force: Manchester **2.05** Road Wars **3.00-4.00am** Hawaii Five-0

Great! Mystery

Noon Unforgettable **1.00pm** In Plain Sight **2.00** Castle **3.00** Diagnosis Murder **5.00** Murder, She Wrote **7.00** Castle **8.00** Unforgettable **9.00** In Plain Sight **10.00** Morning Show Mysteries: Murder on the Menu. A body turns up in the car of one of Billie's guests, a temperamental celebrity chef with secrets in his past. Drama starring Holly Robinson Peete **11.55 FILM:** Lost Letter Mysteries: From Paris with Love (2015) Drama starring Eric Mabius **1.50am FILM:** Killer Mom (2017) Thriller starring Karen Cliche **3.15** Good News on GREAT! Extra **3.25-4.50am** Island of Shadows

Sky Cinema Premiere

11.35am Mortal Kombat II (2026) Fantasy adventure starring Karl Urban **1.40pm** Bugonia (2025) Drama starring Emma Stone **3.45** Eleanor the Great (2025) Drama starring June Squibb **5.30** Wicked: For Good (2025) Fantasy sequel starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande **8.00** Mortal Kombat II (2026) Fantasy adventure starring Karl Urban **10.05** Primate (2025) Premiere. Horror starring Johnny Sequoyah **11.45** Lurker (2025) Crime drama starring Théodore Pellerin **1.30-4.00am** Lee Cronin's The Mummy (2026) Supernatural horror starring Jack Reynor

Sky Sports Main Event

11.30am The Hundred Live. Welsh Fire Women v Trent Rockets Women (start-time 11.30am) **2.30pm** The Hundred Live. Welsh Fire Men v Trent Rockets Men (start-time 3.00pm) **6.00** The Hundred Live. MI London Men v London Spirit Men (start-time 6.30pm) **9.30** Sports Centre **10.00** Sky Sports News at Ten **11.00** Live Tennis. The Washington DC Open. Coverage of day three of the WTA 500 and ATP 500 event **2.00am** Live Tennis. Coverage from the WTA and/or ATP Tours **3.30-5.30am** Live WNBA. Phoenix Mercury v Golden State Valkyries (tip-off 3.00am)

Sky Sports Premier League

Noon Premier League Review **7.00pm** Premier League Stories. Celebrating the playing career and managerial impact of Kevin Keegan **7.30** Newcastle – The Entertainers. The history of Kevin Keegan's exhilarating Newcastle United side during the 1990s **8.00** Premier League Review **9.00** Premier League 360 – Big Sam's Bolton. A look at Sam Allardyce's iconic Bolton team of the early 2000s in the Premier League **11.00** Premier League Years **1.00am** PL Retro **3.00-4.00am** PL Greatest Games

TNT Sports 1

9.30am Live: Fencing World Championship. Coverage from the fifth day of the event at AsiaWorld-Expo in Hong Kong **1.30pm** Test Cricket Highlights **2.30** Live Test Cricket. West Indies v Pakistan. Coverage of the fifth and final day of the first Test in the two-match series from Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Trinidad and Tobago **11.00** Original Documentary **11.15** Original Documentary **11.45** MLB Highlights **12.45am** Live MLB. St Louis Cardinals v Chicago Cubs (start-time 12.45am). Coverage of the National League match from Busch Stadium **3.30-4.00am** MLB Plays of the Week

BBC News

Noon BBC News Now **2.00pm** BBC News Now **2.30** Business Today **2.45** BBC News Now **3.00** Verified Live **4.30** Business Today **4.45** Verified Live **5.30** BBC News **6.30** The World Today **8.00** The Context USA **9.00** The Context **10.00** BBC News at Ten **10.30** Newsnight **11.00** BBC World News America **12.00** BBC News **12.30am** Newscast **1.00** BBC News **1.30** AI Decoded **2.00** Newsday **2.30** Business Today **2.45** BBC Sport **3.00** Newsday **3.30** Business Today **3.45-4.00am** BBC Sport

GB News

Noon Good Afternoon Britain **3.00pm** Martin Daubney **6.00** Dewbs & Co **7.00** GBN Tonight **8.00** Jacob Rees-Mogg's State Of The Nation **9.00** Patrick Christys Tonight **11.00** Patrick Christys Tonight Late Edition **12.00** The Late Show Live **3.00-5.00am** Patrick Christys Tonight Replay

Sky News

Noon Sky News Today **5.00pm** The News Hour with Mark Austin **7.00** Sky News **8.00** UK Tonight with Sarah-Jane Mee **9.00** The World with Yalda Hakim. Reports, interviews and analysis **10.00** The Wrap with Anna Botting **12.00-6.00am** Sky News

Variations

Northern Ireland

BBC One: 10.40pm The Band **11.10** FILM: Eye in the Sky (2015) **12.45am** The Hit List Celebrity Special **1.30 - 6.00am** BBC News
BBC Two: 10.00 - 10.30pm Paula McIntyre's Hamely Kitchen USA
UTV: 7.30 - 8.00pm On the Ground **10.45** Inside the Langham: Britain's First Grand Hotel **11.15** Deal or No Deal: Banker's Best Battles **11.45** Wheel of Fortune **12.40 - 1.05am** Fletchers' Family Farm

Scotland

BBC One: 12.15am Scotcast **12.45** The Hit List Celebrity Special **1.35 - 6.00am** BBC News
BBC Scotland: 7.00pm Reporting Scotland: News at Seven **7.30** Scotland's Home of the Year 2024 **8.00** Island Crossings **9.00** Mhairi Black: Being Me Again **10.00** River City **10.30** Mrs Brown's Boys **11.00** Scotcast **11.30** Des Doesn't Do – Art **midnight** Close
STV: 1.30 - 4.29pm STV Racing: Glorious Goodwood **9.00 - 10.00** Pure: STV Player Presents **4.25 - 5.35am** Unwind with STV

Wales

BBC One: 8.00pm Scam Interceptors **8.30 - 9.00pm** Hunting the Giant Bluefin Tuna: Our Lives
BBC Two: No variations
ITV1 Wales: No variations

ITV1 Regions

No variations

S4C

6.00am Cyw **11.00** Camau Bach **11.00** Abadas **11.15** Cywion Bach **11.20** Caru Canu a Stori **11.30** Octonots **11.45** Jen a Jim a'r Cywiadur **12.00** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **12.05pm** Cartrefi Cymru **12.30** Heno **1.00** Gwlad y Basg: Gwilym Bowen Rhys **1.30** Garddio a Mwy **2.00** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **2.05** Prynhawn Da **3.00** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **3.05** Chris a'r Afal Mawr **4.00** Awr Fawr: Howie **4.05** Awr Fawr: Dreigiau Cadi **4.20** Awr Fawr: Pentre Papur Pop **4.30** Awr Fawr: Ein Byd Bach Ni **4.40** Awr Fawr: Waw! **5.00** Stwnsh **6.00** Dan Do **6.30** Pobol y Cwm **7.00** Heno **7.30** Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd **8.00** Gemau'r Gymanwlad 2026 **10.30** Ras Yr Wyddfa **11.30 - 12.35am** Ty Ffit

Weather & Crosswords

Forecast

General situation

Showery spells in Scotland and Northern Ireland today with isolated showers in northern England later in the day. The odd shower in Wales, while southern England is hot with long sunny spells.

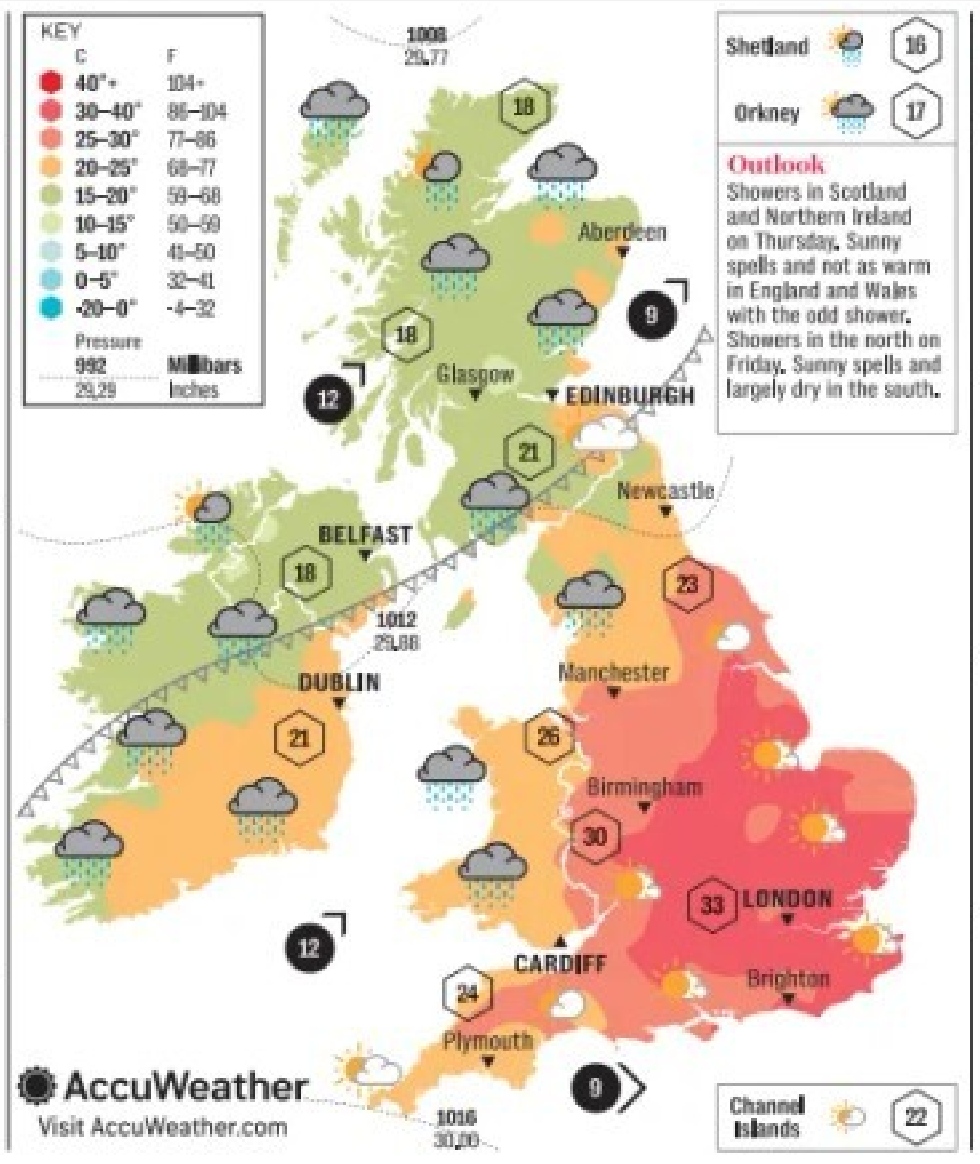
◆ **London, Cent S England, Channel Is, SW England, E England, SE England, E Anglia, Midlands:** Long sunny spells and feeling hot and humid today. Max 80-95F (27-35C). A gentle W to SW wind. Clear spells and remaining dry tonight. Min 55-66F (13-19C).

◆ **NW England, Lake Dist, IoM, Cent N England, NE England:** Clear periods with isolated showers later today and tonight. Max 58-80F (15-27C). A gentle W to SW wind. Min 48-60F (9-16C).

◆ **Wales:** The odd shower today. Max 62-75F (17-24C). A gentle SW wind. Patchy cloud tonight. Min 52-62F (11-17C).

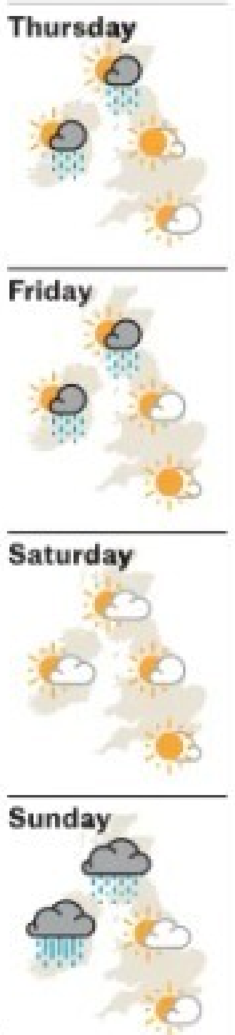
◆ **N Ireland:** Showers today. Max 52-68F (11-20C). A light W to NW wind. The odd shower tonight. Min 45-54F (7-12C).

◆ **SW Scotland, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cent Highlands, Argyll, W Isles, SE Scotland, NE Scotland, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, Orkney, Shetland:** Showery spells today. Max 46-70F (8-21C). A gentle and variable wind. Clear spells with the odd shower tonight. Min 38-54F (3-12C).



Outlook
Showers in Scotland and Northern Ireland on Thursday. Sunny spells and not as warm in England and Wales with the odd shower. Showers in the north on Friday. Sunny spells and largely dry in the south.

Four day forecast



Thursday

Friday

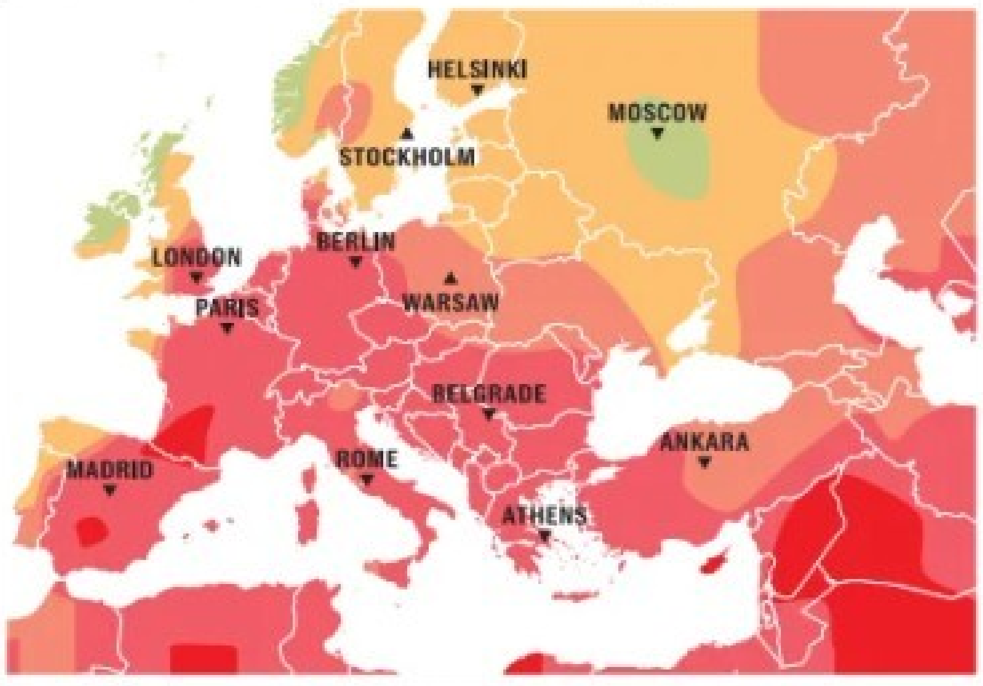
Saturday

Sunday

European readings

Last night's report for 24 hours to 6pm

	Max °C	Min °C	Daytime weather
Akrotiri	33	22	sunny
Alicante	32	25	sunny
Amsterdam	27	14	p/cldy
Athens	37	24	sunny
Barcelona	31	23	windy
Bari	29	26	sunny
Belgrade	31	20	sunny
Benidorm	31	24	sunny
Bergen	15	11	rain
Berlin	23	11	sunny
Biarritz	37	15	sunny
Bodrum	37	21	sunny
Bordeaux	36	16	sunny
Brest	29	12	sunny
Brussels	30	13	sunny
Bucharest	29	19	p/cldy
Budapest	29	16	sunny
Cagliari	32	22	sunny
Chamonix	27	14	sunny
Copenhagen	22	12	p/cldy
Corfu	34	23	sunny
Cork	21	16	showers
Corsica	32	20	sunny
Crete	30	23	sunny
Dublin	26	19	p/cldy
Dubrovnik	31	22	sunny
Faro	29	21	sunny
Florence	37	20	sunny
Frankfurt	30	11	sunny
Funchal	24	20	p/cldy
Gdansk	19	13	showers
Geneva	32	16	sunny
Gibraltar	27	22	sunny
Hamburg	25	13	p/cldy
Helsinki	20	14	showers
Innsbruck	31	13	sunny
Istanbul	32	22	sunny
Kyiv	23	17	showers
La Rochelle	33	18	sunny
Lisbon	34	20	sunny
Locarno	32	17	sunny
Luxembourg	29	14	sunny
Madrid	38	19	sunny
Majorca	31	21	sunny
Malaga	30	21	sunny
Malta	35	27	p/cldy
Marseille	32	20	sunny
Menorca	31	24	sunny
Milan	33	22	sunny
Monaco	31	23	sunny
Moscow	28	17	sunny
Munich	29	14	sunny
Naples	35	24	sunny
Nice	30	24	sunny
Nicosia	40	21	sunny
Oporto	24	19	p/cldy
Oslo	22	10	p/cldy
Palermo	31	27	p/cldy
Paris	33	15	sunny
Perpignan	31	21	sunny
Prague	26	13	sunny
Reykjavik	15	8	showers
Rhodes	33	27	sunny
Riga	21	12	p/cldy
Rome	33	22	sunny
Saint Malo	28	14	sunny
Salzburg	29	14	sunny
Santander	27	15	sunny
Santiago/Comp.	32	19	sunny
Sofia	31	16	p/cldy
St. Petersburg	22	17	rain
Stockholm	22	11	sunny
Strasbourg	31	13	sunny
Tenerife	27	21	windy
Tirana	36	22	sunny
Toulouse	37	16	sunny
Valencia	32	23	sunny
Venice	30	21	sunny
Vienna	29	20	sunny
Vigo	29	20	sunny
Vilnius	20	12	showers
Warsaw	22	12	windy
Zagreb	31	19	sunny
Zurich	31	12	sunny



Nature Notes

Baby beavers born in the Highlands

At least two baby beavers have been born in an area of the Scottish Highlands, marking the first time in four centuries where such births have been recorded in the region.

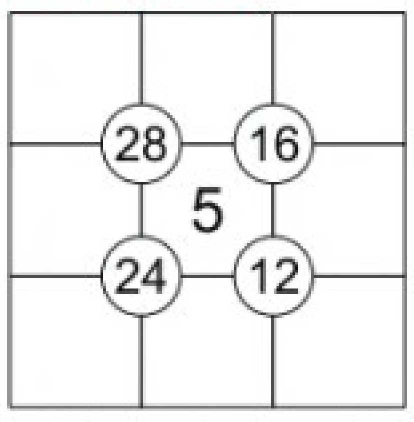
In the Glen Affric area, around 15 miles from Loch Ness, the beaver kits were born following a joint re-introduction project by Trees for Life and agency Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS).

The two beavers were spotted at Loch Beinn a Mheadhoin in the glen, and are reportedly in good health.

Experts from Trees for Life and FLS estimate the duo were born in either May or June. Tobias Leask of Trees for Life, said: "These beaver kits symbolise a wildlife success story four centuries in the making, and how nature can recover when we give it a chance.

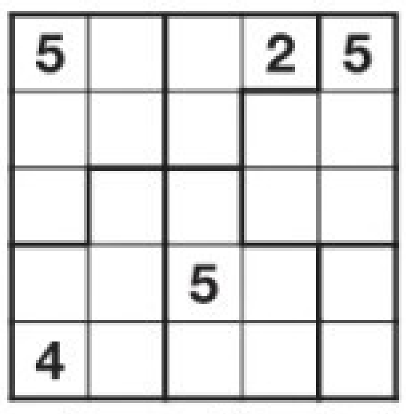
"Seeing them for the first time is something I'll never forget. It was one of those rare moments when you realise you're witnessing history."

Sujiko® MODERATE NO 5448



To play Sujiko, enter the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the total in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding squares. Today's solutions appear tomorrow.

Suguru NO 2536

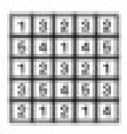


The aim of Suguru is to fill the grid so that no same digit is touching. A two-cell outlined block contains the digits 1 and 2; a three-cell block contains 1, 2, 3; and so on. The same digit must not appear in neighbouring cells, not even diagonally.

Yesterday's solutions:

Sujiko 5447: 198
526
734

Suguru 2535:



1	3	2	3	2
5	4	1	4	5
1	2	3	2	1
3	5	4	5	3
2	1	2	1	4

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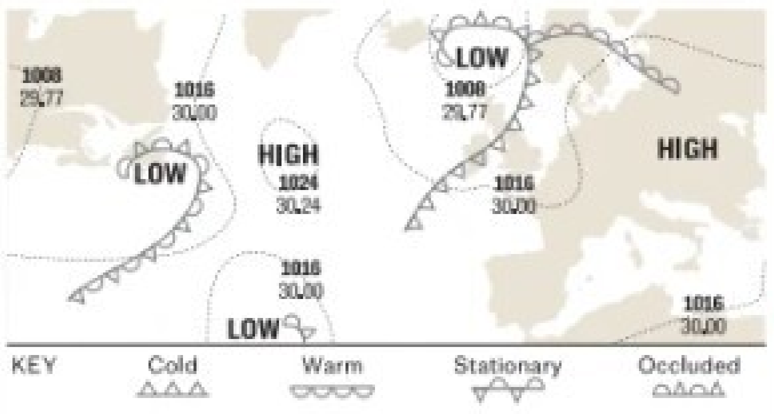
British readings

Last night's report for 24 hours to 6pm - *estimated readings

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max/Min °C		Daytime weather
Aberdeen	5.2	0.42	24°	14°	rain
Aberystwyth	2.8	0.00	23°	18°	p/cloudy
Antrim	0.2	0.18	23°	18°	rain
Aviemore	0.5	0.55	21°	13°	rain
Barnstaple	3.2	0.00	24°	18°	p/cloudy
Barrow-in-Furns.	1.1	0.01	23°	18°	showers
Basingstoke	4.3	0.00	27°	17°	p/cloudy
Bedford	5.1	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Belfast	2.5	0.00	25°	19°	showers
Berwick	1.8	0.19	22°	16°	rain
Birmingham	5.9	0.00	26°	18°	p/cloudy
Bodmin	3.6	0.00	20°	17°	p/cloudy
Bournemouth	6.5	0.00	24°	17°	p/cloudy
Braintree	10.2	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Brecon	1.1	0.00	23°	17°	p/cloudy
Bridlington	4.7	0.00	26°	17°	p/cloudy
Brighton	9.0	0.00	25°	17°	p/cloudy
Bristol	2.6	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Camborne	3.8	0.00	21°	17°	p/cloudy
Cardiff	1.9	0.18	23°	18°	rain
Carlisle	2.8	0.15	23°	16°	rain
Catterick	1.6	0.00	25°	17°	windy
Cheltenham	3.9	0.00	26°	18°	p/cloudy
Chester	0.7	0.00	24°	18°	p/cloudy
Coventry	4.0	0.00	28°	18°	p/cloudy
Doncaster	2.3	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Dover	11.3	0.00	24°	17°	sunny
Dundee	1.5	0.30	22°	15°	rain
Eastbourne	11.1	0.00	26°	17°	sunny
Edinburgh	0.3	0.40	24°	15°	rain
Epsom	7.5	0.00	27°	17°	p/cloudy
Falmouth	4.2	0.00	21°	17°	p/cloudy
Farnborough	6.5	0.00	27°	17°	p/cloudy
Fort William	0.0	1.05	21°	14°	rain
Glasgow	0.5	0.56	21°	15°	rain
Great Malvern	3.6	0.00	27°	18°	cloudy
Grimsby	6.5	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Guernsey	6.1	0.00	24°	16°	sunny
Hereford	3.5	0.00	26°	18°	p/cloudy
High Wycombe	6.5	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Holyhead	1.4	0.00	23°	17°	windy
Huddersfield	3.0	0.00	24°	17°	p/cloudy
Ipswich	9.9	0.00	29°	16°	p/cloudy
Isle of Man	2.3	0.02	20°	16°	showers
Isle of Skye	1.5	0.61	17°	13°	rain
Isle of Wight	9.3	0.00	26°	17°	sunny
Isles of Scilly	5.7	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Jersey	7.6	0.00	27°	16°	sunny
Keswick	1.2	0.27	22°	16°	rain
Kew Gardens	10.2	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
King's Lynn	9.5	0.00	28°	15°	p/cloudy
Leeds	3.9	0.00	25°	18°	p/cloudy
Leek	4.4	0.00	25°	17°	p/cloudy
Leominster	3.1	0.00	26°	18°	p/cloudy
Lincoln	2.6	0.00	28°	18°	p/cloudy
Liverpool	9.2	0.02	25°	18°	p/cloudy
London	7.3	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Manchester	8.9	0.03	26°	18°	p/cloudy
Middlesbrough	2.1	0.00	25°	16°	windy
Newcastle	6.2	0.01	25°	15°	showers
Newquay	2.2	0.00	21°	18°	p/cloudy
Nottingham	4.0	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Orkney	1.0	0.34	16°	12°	rain
Oxford	5.4	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Perth	0.6	0.37	22°	14°	rain
Peterborough	6.1	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Plymouth	4.5	0.00	22°	18°	p/cloudy
Portsmouth*	8.7	0.00*	27°	17°	sunny
Prestwick	1.4	0.42	22°	15°	rain
Ramsgate	11.3	0.00	25°	17°	sunny
Rhyl	1.3	0.00	23°	17°	cloudy
Rugby	4.2	0.00	28°	17°	p/cloudy
Salisbury	7.3	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Scunthorpe	2.7	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Sheffield	2.3	0.00	27	18	p/cloudy
Shetland	2.2	0.04	15°	10°	showers
Shrewsbury	3.6	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Skegness	5.1	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Southampton	2.9	0.00	28°	19°	p/cloudy
Southend-on-Sea	10.7	0.00	28°	17°	sunny
Stockport	2.1	0.01	26°	18°	showers
Stornoway	0.9	0.63	18°	13°	rain
Swansea	3.4	0.00	22°	17°	p/cloudy
Swindon	4.0	0.00	27°	17°	p/cloudy
Thirsk	2.2	0.00	25°	17°	p/cloudy
Tiree	1.8	0.66	18°	13°	rain
Weymouth	10.2	0.00	25°	17°	sunny
Whitehaven	3.4	0.03	22°	16°	showers
Windermere	0.5	0.20	22°	17°	rain
Worcester	3.2	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
Yeovil	3.1	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy
York	3.7	0.00	27°	18°	p/cloudy

Atlantic front



Noon today: Showers in the northern United Kingdom while the southern United Kingdom, France, Spain and western Germany remains dry and hot.

Sun & moon (Greenwich)

Sun rises	0521
Sun sets	2055
Moon rises	2108
Moon sets	0444
Last quarter	Aug 6

Yesterday

Warmest	Coningsby 31C (88F)
Coldest	Aberdeen 14°C (F)
Wettest	Tulloch Bridge 1.08 in.
Sunniest	Kinloss 13.0 hr.

Lighting up

Aberdeen	2129 to 0503
Belfast	2132 to 0532
Birmingham	2105 to 0524
London	2055 to 0522
Manchester	2110 to 0522
Penzance	2110 to 0548

High water

Aberdeen	0102	3.9m	1336	3.8m
Belfast	1111	3.1m	2323	3.4m
Cardiff	0647	11.0m	1907	11.5m
Dover	1105	6.2m	2321	6.1m
Falmouth	0506	4.6m	1720	4.9m
Harwich	--	--	1144	3.8m
Holyhead	1023	5.0m	2230	5.4m
Hull	0556	6.9m	1833	6.6m
Liverpool	1108	8.5m	2317	8.9m
London	0138	6.7m	1357	6.6m
Portsmouth	1135	4.4m	2338	4.4m
Southampton	0057	3.8m	1036	4.2m

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Pollen count

Fungal spores are moderate. Weed pollen is moderate. Tree and grass pollen are low.

Provided by the National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit

Sea forecast

S North Sea: A gentle to fresh south-southeasterly wind today. Seas will be very rough. Visibility will be good.

Dover Strait, English Channel: A gentle to moderate southwesterly wind today. Seas will be high on the east and the west. Visibility will be good.

St. George's Channel: A gentle to moderate southwesterly wind today. Seas will be very rough. Visibility will be good.

Irish Sea: A gentle to moderate southwesterly wind today. Seas will be rough. Visibility will be poor.

World readings

	Max °C	Min °C	Daytime weather
Accra	27	24	windy
Addis Ababa	25	15	showers
Adelaide	15	9	showers
Alexandria	31	23	sunny
Algiers	33	20	windy
Amman	32	20	sunny
Anchorage	14	12	cloudy
Ankara	30	12	sunny
Ascension Is.	27	23	showers
Auckland	14	5	sunny
Baghdad	44	31	sunny
Bahamas	31	26	p/cldy
Bahrain	38	33	haze
Bamako	35	23	haze
Bangkok	33	27	p/cldy
Beijing	35	24	haze
Beirut	37	23	sunny
Bermuda	28	23	storms
Bogota	20	8	rain
Bridgetown	30	27	showers
Brisbane	23	13	p/cldy
Buenos Aires	16	14	cloudy
Cairo	36	24	haze
Canberra	13	1	p/cldy
Cape Town	20	7	sunny
Casablanca	32	20	sunny
Chicago	24	20	showers
Christchurch	13	-1	sunny
Colombo	32	27	rain
Damascus	38	19	sunny
Dar es Salaam	29	19	p/cldy
Dhaka	33	27	rain
Dubai	39	34	haze
Falkland Is.	5	2	p/cldy
Harare	23	4	haze
Havana	32	22	rain
Hong Kong	31	27	storms
Honolulu	26	25	showers
Jakarta	33	25	p/cldy
Jeddah	37	29	haze
Jerusalem	30	20	sunny
Johannesburg	19	3	haze
Kabul	33	20	haze
Karachi	33	28	windy
Kolkata	31	26	rain
Kuala Lumpur	33	26	showers
La Paz	15	1	sunny
Lahore	36	29	rain
Lima	25	20	haze
Los Angeles	25	20	p/cldy
Maldives	32	27	cloudy
Manila	32	24	rain
Marrakesh	39	21	sunny
Melbourne	17	7	showers
Miami	32	26	storms
Montego Bay	31	26	storms
Mumbai	32	27	rain
Nairobi	25	11	p/cldy
New Orleans	33	26	p/cldy
New Delhi	32	25	rain
New York	26	20	storms
Ottawa	20	19	storms
Perth	16	4	p/cldy
Port-of-Spain	32	26	rain
Rio de Janeiro	27	19	haze
Riyadh	43	29	cloudy
San Francisco	17	15	p/cldy
Santiago	14	12	rain
Seattle	19	16	p/cldy
Seoul	32	26	p/cldy
Seychelles	29	26	cloudy
Singapore	31	27	storms
Sydney	22	8	sunny
Taipei City	35	26	p/cldy
Tangier	32	25	sunny
Tel Aviv	33	25	sunny
Tokyo	30	24	storms
Toronto	26	20	storms
Tunis	33	23	sunny
Vancouver	18	16	showers
Washington	28	24	storms
Wellington	13	4	sunny
Winnipeg	27	16	haze

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather.com**
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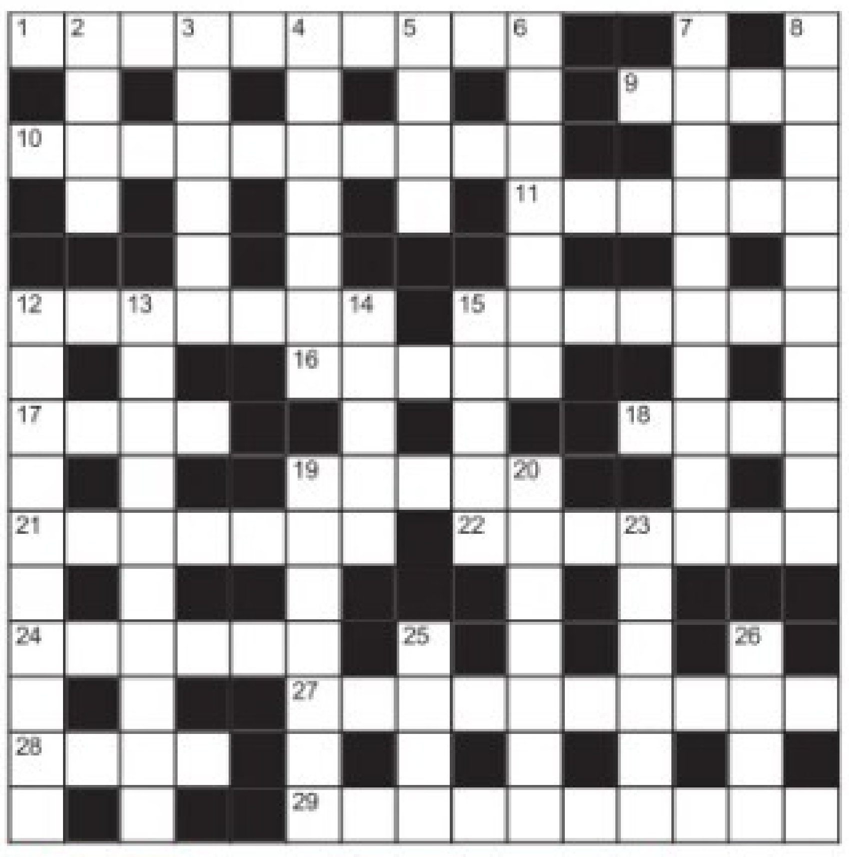
Crossword 31,304

telegraph.co.uk/puzzles



Across

1 Rabbit finally ate carrot turning reddish brown (10)
9 Leaders of bishops implacably against sexist prejudice (4)
10 I mess about when drunk or sober (10)
11 Dainty City hideaway (6)
12 Early childhood popular? Imagine! (7)
15 Illuminate answer to crossword clue "English knight" (7)
16 Subject closed, prince periodically discharged (5)
17 Faction determined to arrest Charlie (4)
18 This compiler admitting America is an inspiration (4)
19 Halle Berry, at heart revolutionary maverick (5)
21 Clobber engineers in shock (7)
22 Small axe husband traded for right mechanical device (7)
24 Liberal philosopher engaging women's solicitor (6)
27 One breaking into a Volkswagen Golf etc is sorry (10)
28 Heartless work of fiction, *A Christmas Carol*? (4)
29 Invaders arrive without resistance in disputed territory (2-4-4)

Down

2 Pound deposited in each island in the Med (4)
3 Hesitation around Ms Turner, a bit of a looker? (6)
4 Close container for 13 Down (7)
5 Excessively large utensil (4)
6 As the Gunners wanting a student in charge? (7)
7 Gift of gold that ultimately infuriated the old king? (5,5)
8 Austere spy throttling Australian leaving Spain (10)
12 Getting set up in Main St, Allington (10)
13 Confront authority after pinching Dior's no. 1 cosmetic (4,6)
14 The call of the mountains? (5)
15 On air, finale from Wurlitzer organ (5)
19 Avoid a repeated piece of music (7)
20 Yoko Ono regularly supports light satire (7)
23 Initially, children eat authentic breakfast food (6)
25 Wander around promenade briefly naked in the morning (4)
26 Look cruel, by the sound of it (4)

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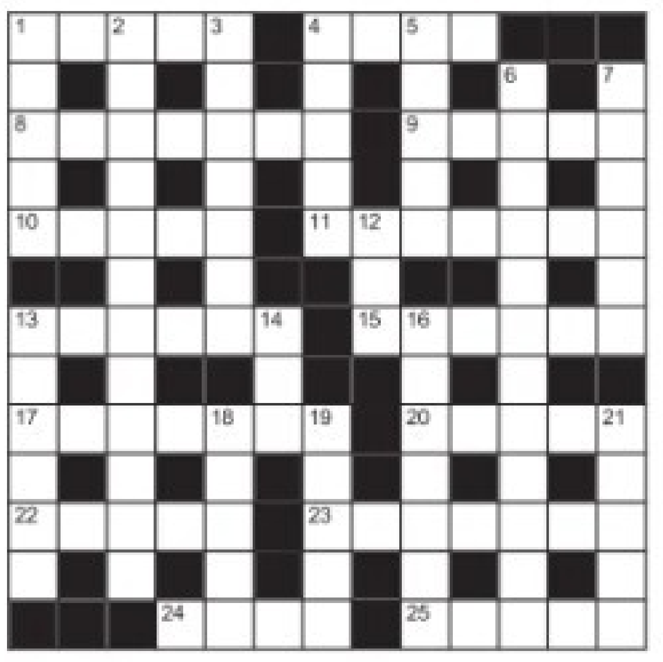
Help with today's clues Single clues **0905 757 0120.** All Across/Down clues **0905 757 0121.** Calls cost £1/minute, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon-Fri. SP: Spoke – Helpline **0333 202 3390.**

Quick Crossword



Across

1 *Projecting tissue growth* (5)
4 *Stroke on the green* (4)
8 *Dense grove* (7)
9 *Raptor's claw* (5)
10 A black tea (5)
11 Vacation (7)
13 Nodding off (6)
15 Remove on a computer (6)
17 Female relative (7)
20 Hopping mad (5)
22 Play a guitar (5)
23 Second city resident (7)
24 Male pig (4)
25 In advance (5)

Down

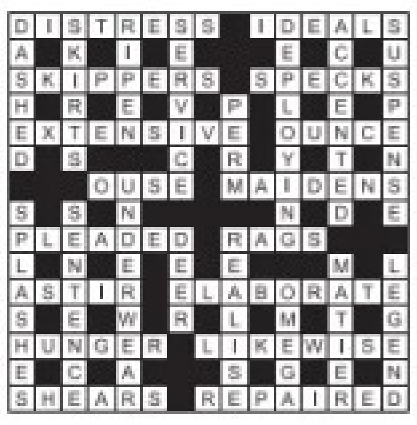
1 Flat bread (5)
2 Non-interference (7-5)
3 Japanese craze (7)
4 Small plot (5)
5 Sum (5)
6 Peter Gabriel hit; heavy tool (12)
7 Complex protein (6)
12 Elderly (3)
13 Compendium (6)
14 Jewel (3)
16 Foodie (7)
18 Disney film (5)
19 Yellowish resin (5)
21 Mournful poem (5)

Help with today's Quick Crossword clues Single clues **0905 757 0122.** Solution **0905 757 0123.** Calls cost £1/minute, plus network access charge. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. Services open Mon-Sat. SP: Spoke – Helpline 0333 202 3390.

Yesterday's Quick Crossword Solution

Across: 1 Hart, 3 Bray, 6 Cur, *(Heartbreaker)* 9 Laughed, 10 Linen, 11 Speed, 12 Costume, 13 Please, 15 Sports, 18 Outcome, 20 Raise, 23 Leave, 24 Imitate, 25 Met, 26 Easy, 27 Very.
Down: 1 Helps, 2 Rouse, 4 Reduce, 5 Yells, 6 Conquer, 7 Runners, 8 Shades, 13 Problem, 14 Extract, 16 Permit, 17 Begins, 19 Obese, 21 Image, 22 Enemy.

Solution No 31,303



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A		K		I		E				E		C		U
S	K	I	P	P	E	R	S		S	P	E	C	K	S
H		R		E		V		P		L		E		P
E	X	T	E	N	S	I	V	E		O	U	N	C	E
D		S				C		R		Y		T		N
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